A Formative Evaluation of the Humanities Faculty Mentorship Programme

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COMPULSORY DECLARATION:

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works of other people has been attributed, cited and referenced.

Signature: Signed by candidate

Signature removed

Date: 15 December 2016

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Executive Summary

This dissertation focuses on process and outcome evaluations of the Humanities Faculty Mentorship Programme which provides psychosocial support through mentoring. The programme is targeted at Extended Degree students who are deemed likely to be under-prepared for the demands of the University of Cape Town. However, it is open to Mainstream students on a voluntary basis. The programme's primary objective is to promote psychosocial adjustment with longer-term outcomes of academic proficiency and university retention.

The process-level evaluation questions inquired as to whether beneficiaries were from the intended target population, mentees' dosage, recurrent problems and satisfaction, mentor involvement, satisfaction with training, requests for assistance and referrals, as well as funding and staffing. The outcome-level evaluation questions asked whether ED mentees demonstrate adequate psychosocial adjustment, were academically proficient, and remained enrolled at UCT after the programme.

A descriptive design was used for the process evaluation. Secondary data, specifically programme records and mentor reports, as well as primary data collected from a brief discussion with a programme manager, the mentee satisfaction questionnaire and the mentor training questionnaire, were collected. Descriptive statistics, thematic abstraction and frequency of mention were used to analyse these data. A single group quasi-experimental post-test only design was used to assess psychosocial adjustment and academic proficiency. In addition, a matched non-equivalent group post-test only design was used to assess academic proficiency. The latter design could not be used for the psychosocial outcome due to low response rates for the comparison group. Retention could not be addressed as data were unavailable from the faculty.

Results of the process evaluation indicated that mentees were satisfied, that each mentor training components was useful and that mentors were generally sufficiently involved. However, the programme might have been overburdened with voluntary Mainstream students, mentee attendance was low, and there were staffing issues such as a shortage of mentors. Academic problems and academic referrals, namely to lecturers/tutors, the writing centre and curriculum advisors were most recurrent. Because of incomplete and missing mentor reports and the qualitative nature of these reports, results for mentee attendance, recurrent problems, mentor involvement, mentor referrals and assistance requests should be interpreted with caution. The outcome evaluation showed that all mentees generally displayed adequate psychosocial

adjustment after the programme. ED mentees were academically proficient after the programme and generally had higher GPA scores than the comparison group.

In the light of these findings, it is suggested that the programme be limited to ED students, that communication, cooperation and information-sharing between programme staff, the Humanities Faculty and the Education Development Unit be established, and that a newly-designed, electronic mentor reporting system be used for improved implementation monitoring. In terms of future evaluation, it is recommended that all data be collected using student identification numbers so that implementation variables, such as mentee attendance and satisfaction, can be linked to outcomes for better assessment of programme effect, as well as to investigate the relationships between the outcomes.

Because mentees demonstrated adequate psychosocial adjustment at the end of the programme and there was no pre-test, it is possible that poor psychosocial adjustment might not be the need of ED students entering university. Further, as academic issues permeated throughout mentees' recurrent problems and mentors' assistance requests and referrals, it is possible that academic under-preparedness represented a greater need. It is advised that a pre-test of psychosocial adjustment be administered in future evaluation to assess the underlying need of ED students entering university.

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Introduction

The South African tertiary education system has been ranked highly according to global standards (Cloete, 2016). However, the system is still being redesigned for the post-apartheid era (Jama, Mapasela, & Beylefeld, 2008). At the University of Cape Town (UCT), for example, the Education Development Unit (EDU) serves historically disadvantaged students by providing additional support to help these students adjust to the university environment and demands. While the number of black students enrolled has increased, graduation output is racially unequal (Petersen, Louw, & Dumont, 2009). Between 2000 and 2006, only 27% of students accepted into contact institutions were sufficiently prepared to complete their undergraduate studies within the intended time (Cloete, 2016). The number of black students who fail or drop out before the end of the intended study period is more than double the number of those who graduate (Cloete, 2016). It is estimated that 45% of students embarking on undergraduate study will never graduate (Cloete, 2016). Evidently, graduation rates present a challenge in South African higher education (Jama et al., 2008).

Burdened with student debt, and lacking the qualifications necessary to secure employment, poor students unable to complete their studies return to poverty (Cloete, 2016). In addition, employment and earning differentials between the educated and uneducated perpetuate income inequality (Cloete, 2016). Thus the tertiary education system can be disempowering (Cloete, 2016).

Students may drop out of university when they have not been properly integrated into the university's academic and social systems (Tinto, 1975 as cited in Jama et al., 2008). Pre-college attributes, family background, prior schooling, peer support as well as satisfaction with, and commitment to, the university influence retention (Jama et al., 2008).

South Africa's history of educational inequality partially explains students' underperformance. Both economic and educational disadvantage may negatively affect university retention (Petersen et al., 2009). Disadvantaged social, economic and cultural backgrounds contribute to unequal levels of higher education preparedness (Fraser & Killen, 2005). Thus, South Africa's racial history means black students are disadvantaged on formerly white campuses (Schultz, 2010). The challenges black South African, or 'non-traditional' students, face are unique and complex because of their disadvantaged schooling and social backgrounds (Jama et al., 2008). These students often experience financial stress and are unable to afford accommodation, food, fees

and books. They commute long distances, making them late or absent. Their families are often uneducated and therefore are not equipped to support a child in higher education. As English is often not their first language, they may struggle to meet expectations for reading, writing and speaking in academic English.

Poor black students still receive lower quality primary and secondary schooling than their middle-class white counterparts because of under-qualified teachers and the lack of resources in schools (Schultz, 2010). This causes a deficiency in the academic literacy needed at university level, that is, the ability to meet university expectations and display the core academic skills required (Schultz, 2010). To assume that academic failure is due to lack of effort is problematic as social factors significantly affect non-traditional students' university experiences. Universities' understanding of the impact of academic and social factors on academic performance and retention is necessary (Jama et al., 2008). Interventions to support retention, particularly for previously disadvantaged students, are necessary (Jama et al., 2008).

To address disparities in preparedness, many South African universities have extended their degree programmes to support disadvantaged students (Schultz, 2010). These programmes aim to bridge the gap between poor secondary education and the university environment (Schultz, 2010). UCT's Humanities Faculty's Extended Degree (ED) programmes represent one such effort (the ED and Mainstream terminology is used in the 2015 ED Guide on the EDU's website to refer to the 4 and 3- year degree programmes respectively so this terminology is used throughout this evaluation). Students who do not fully meet the entrance requirements for the Mainstream Humanities programmes, but fit equity criteria and display academic potential, are accepted into the ED programme. Low Matric and National Benchmark Test results indicate that they are not as prepared for university as Mainstream students and are presumably more likely to fail and drop out. The ED programme provides students with augmented and foundation courses which promote academic development.

In the light of the non-academic challenges these students may face, psychosocial support is also necessary to enhance university adjustment and promote retention. For this reason, the Humanities Faculty introduced a Mentoring Programme, the Humanities Faculty Mentorship Programme (HFMP), to run parallel with the ED programme to provide such support. In this dissertation, I shall evaluate whether the HFMP succeeded in providing psychosocial support and, in the long-term, improved student retention during the first year at university.

Programme Description

The following programme description was compiled using UCT's Humanities EDU website, http://www.humedu.uct.ac.za/, and guide, http://www.humedu.uct.ac.za/sites/default/files/image_tool/images/270/home/Hum-EDguide2015-web1.pdf (2015), mentor recruitment advertisements (2015), the mentor-mentee contract (n.d.), the mentor-supervisor mentor contract (n.d.), the mentor resource toolkit (2016), observation of the initial mentor training day (February 13, 2016) and personal communication with two HFMP managers (February 16, 2016; February 25, 2016).

The HFMP was founded in 2013 by UCT's Humanities EDU and is funded by UCT. The EDU provides support to students enrolled in the Humanities ED programmes. In 2014, programme management was transferred to the Humanities Faculty under the supervision of the Student Development Officer (SDO). The EDU's role became limited to supplying lists of ED students requiring mentors and notifying programme staff of any students struggling academically. Although it now includes Mainstream students, the HFMP's vision is to support ED students thought to be at-risk of underperforming. These students often face additional challenges such as the stigmatisation related to enrolment in the four-year degree programme, not being English-speaking or not having been exposed to an academic culture such as that at UCT.

The programme's primary goal is to ensure students' psychosocial adjustment, with priority given to ED students. This objective is promoted through the provision of a support network. The HFMP is based on a holistic approach to academic success where psychosocial adjustment is considered significant in addition to academic factors. Social and psychological problems common during initial university adjustment, such as financial constraints, travel logistics, family pressure, identity issues, physical and mental health and homesickness may influence academic performance. Therefore, in the long term, psychosocial support and adjustment are intended to enhance academic performance and promote retention.

This psychosocial support network is presented through the peer-mentoring relationship. The rationale behind peer-mentorship is that first-year students feel more comfortable discussing their experience with, and taking advice from, senior students who have successfully faced similar challenges and can use their own experiences to give advice. The aim is to empower students to manage successfully the problems they face during their first-year by taking responsibility for their own wellbeing and academic performance. More broadly, the HFMP aims to: monitor first-year students' academic progress and co-curricular activities, address and resolve

students' problems and create a community of peer support by encouraging senior students' involvement in first-year students' academic and psychosocial development.

The SDO supervises two staff members. Until the end of the 2014 programme, staff recruited and managed a group of senior mentors who each supervised a group of junior mentors. Each junior mentor was assigned approximately five first-year students and reported back to a senior mentor. At the end of 2014, the student development officer decided that the hierarchy between junior and senior mentors was problematic and that senior mentors were not giving their junior mentors adequate feedback. The 2015 structure, which extends to 2016, merged the administrative staff role with that of senior mentors by appointing supervisor mentors. Thus supervisor mentors serve as the single supervision authority to mentors. This year, there are four supervisor mentors: the two programme staff members and two Student Orientation and Advocacy Services (SOAS) staff members. This allows for direct contact between programme staff and mentors for communication, feedback and support.

In 2014, the programme was opened to Mainstream degree students in addition to ED students. Mainstream three-year degree students' participation, while monitored, is not compulsory and they may leave the programme at any stage. In previous years, the programme has run throughout the first and second semesters of the year with an option for mentees to opt out at the end of the first semester. In 2016, the programme runs for the first six months of the year, after which structured activities cease. During the last six months, mentors are available to mentees on an ad hoc basis. This unstructured mentor-mentee relationship after the first semester serves to enhance programme relevance to mentees while reducing mentor stress from having to force disinterested students' participation

Mentors present programme activities to mentees and the programme's success may rely on the quality of the mentor-mentee relationship as this could influence mentees' engagement with, and receptiveness to, services provided. Becoming a mentor is voluntary for Humanities students in any department in their second year of studies and above. At the end of the programme, mentors receive a certificate of participation and a letter from the Dean of the Humanities Faculty. To recruit mentors, advertisements are placed by means of posters and electronic advertisements on Vula, UCT's learning management system, as well as in-lecture presentations.

Mentor candidates receive one of two forms to complete. Returning mentors receive a form requiring personal and academic information, society involvement and a motivation for continuing as a mentor. New applicants receive a form requiring the same information. In

addition, this form includes a description of the HFMP, mentor roles and responsibilities and the benefits of becoming a mentor. New applicants are also required to email a curriculum vitae, their academic transcript and a letter of motivation. Of specific importance to programme staff are candidates' university results, work experience, participation in societies and age. Returning mentors as well as applicants who had previously been mentees in the programme are given preference due to their relevant experience.

Selected mentor candidates are interviewed in groups of four by two staff members. Successful candidates are notified and invited to attend a mentor welcome event. Mentors sign contracts with their supervisor mentors outlining the aims of the programme, the mentor's responsibilities and the supervisor mentor's responsibilities.

ED students are informed at registration that they will be assigned a mentor. Mainstream students receive optional sign-up forms attached to their registration documentation. With the exception of efforts to match mentees with mentors of the same gender, pairing is random. Mentors are given the names of their assigned mentees and contact them via email to introduce themselves and set up the first meeting. Mentees sign contracts with their mentors which outline the objectives of the mentor-mentee relationship as well as both parties' responsibilities.

Once selected, mentors undergo mandatory training and supervision; both before meeting their mentees and throughout the programme. The initial session takes place on a Saturday before university opens. SOAS staff run discussions and activities in small groups outlining first-year students' challenges and the role of mentors to help mentors understand the range of challenges their mentees may face and their role in helping mentees. Mentors are informed of the importance of the mentoring relationship for improving mentees' first year experiences. Common challenges discussed include language barriers, stigmatisation, academic adjustment, exposure to new cultures, financial stress and identity issues. Suggestions are given as to how mentors' actions can help mentees with their academic performance as well as personal and social problems.

The importance of helpful action is emphasized as opposed to verbal suggestions. The role of peer-mentorship in reducing first year students' anxieties is explained and the importance of sharing mentors' own experiences is emphasized. Because mentor-mentee communication is essential to programme objectives, practical ideas for sustaining the relationship are discussed. Specifically, returning mentors give advice about how to maintain the relationship such as: remaining attentive and approachable, establishing mutual expectations, getting to know mentees

personally and sharing mutual interests. After the SOAS session, all mentors come together and engage in discussion led by programme administrators. Tips for successful mentorship are given and returning mentors share their experiences. Debates ensue around allowing mentees to learn for themselves as opposed to spoon-feeding them. Mentors are also informed of administrative processes such as: how often meetings and supervision sessions occur, when weekly reports are due and how to use the resource toolkit.

Ongoing training and support for mentors are provided in the form of compulsory fortnightly supervision sessions, in groups of eight, run by a supervisor mentor. These sessions teach additional mentorship and other skills such as active listening and time management techniques. Activities done can be conducted with mentees in subsequent meetings. These sessions ensure mentors feel supported by providing a platform for anonymously voicing concerns they have about their mentees or problems experienced during communication with mentees. The group discussion allows mentors to learn from each others' experiences, gain new insight and share advice. The mentor - supervisor mentor relationship constitutes further mentorship as supervisors provide advice and guidance for mentors; especially so that mentors do not feel overburdened with the responsibility of their mentees' problems. Supervisor mentors are also available for private consultation.

Each mentor is assigned between three and six mentees with whom they are required to meet once a week. Group meetings are encouraged but requests for individual meetings should be granted. Meetings last forty-five minutes. Choosing non-academic settings for meetings is advised so as to foster a comfortable environment and show mentees new places on campus.

Weekly meetings encompass a range of topics through various discussions and activities outlined in the mentor resource toolkit. The content of each meeting is designed to address challenges mentees may be experiencing at a specific time. Prescribed discussions and activities serve as guidelines. Mentees are free to raise other issues they may have so as to promote engagement, openness and understanding within the mentor-mentee relationship. All discussions are kept confidential unless for the sake of the mentee's wellbeing. The content of mentor-mentee meetings and the activities for presenting such content, are described below.

Institutional knowledge and skills

Institutional knowledge and skills are required by first-year students in order to navigate the university and to make full use of its resources. Mentors engage in various discussions and activities to teach mentees about university resources to minimise their anxiety in facing the

potentially overwhelming new university environment. Mentors and their mentees go together to a Humanities computer laboratory and mentors assess mentees' computer literacy skills and, if need be, show them how to use the computers and online platforms such as Vula and UCT email. Computer laboratory rules are explained and mentees are shown how to gain access using their student cards. Mentors and their mentees also tour the library together. Mentors explain the library rules, different study-zones and the purpose of the Knowledge Commons area. Mentees are shown how to: access library resources, approach the help desk, load printing credits and print documents.

Mentors discuss commonly used terms and acronyms at UCT in order to ensure they understand their surroundings. For example, mentors explain what Duly Performed (DP) and Duly Performed Refused (DPR) mean. The services provided by Campus Protection Services (CPS), the Humanities Student Council and the Discrimination and Harassment Office (DISCHO) are discussed. Mentors also provide basic information on administrative processes such as deadlines for applying for financial aid.

Time management skills

Mentors discuss the importance of scheduling, organisation and prioritisation in the context of university life. The focus is on using time productively, meeting deadlines and avoiding unnecessary stress. Mentors advise mentees to use timetables to keep track of their class times and diaries to schedule what work should be done between lectures and tutorials. They also advise mentees to organise their books, files and notes consistently during the term so that last-minute stress is avoided. Mentees are advised to ensure their priorities are conducive to their academic goals. To do so, they should log their activities for two weeks and, after reviewing this log, they may reallocate time to achieve a balance. Mentors may carry out time management activities learned during supervision, such as personal priority surveys, to help mentees realise the importance of prioritisation and work-life balance.

Emotional wellbeing check-in

Throughout the programme, mentors follow up on the emotional wellbeing of their mentees by asking them how they are coping. There are no structured activities to do this as such sharing should happen naturally as the mentor-mentee relationship strengthens. The quality of this relationship influences mentees' openness about their experiences and emotional problems. There are recommended ways for mentors to build the trust needed to foster a beneficial relationship. For example, mentors should be attentive, available and approachable, make sincere efforts to get to know mentees, establish shared interests outside of mentorship and share their

own experiences. These are ongoing activities necessary to foster and maintain a relationship which allows mentees to confide in their mentors.

Career and curriculum planning

Mentors encourage their mentees to think about their futures in terms of postgraduate studies and career plans. An activity is conducted in which mentees are asked to think about their short and long- term goals for their careers and where they envision themselves in two years and then in ten years. This exercise allows mentees to discuss their goals for the future and mentors to suggest career paths or postgraduate studies relevant to mentees' majors. Mentees should begin to realise what they need to start doing in order to achieve their short or long- term goals. Mentors may give advice if they are knowledgeable or share personal goals or experiences. Mentees are encouraged to make appointments with UCT Career Services during the semester to receive professional input on their career planning.

Academic check-in

Mentors regularly check that mentees are managing their deadlines successfully and if there are any problems. Like the emotional wellbeing check-ins, these are discussions which ascertain whether mentees are meeting course requirements, have DP status, are worried about their writing skills and are passing their courses. Academic problems are beyond the mentor's expertise and should be referred. However, mentors are encouraged to share their own experiences, such as those of examination-writing, to help reduce mentees' anxiety. Mentors discuss methods for examination preparation such as setting up timetables of all the work to be covered, being disciplined and focused, active learning and healthy eating and sleeping. Mentors emphasise the importance of staying calm during the examination and of reading questions carefully.

Referral provision

Mentors are not qualified academic tutors, curriculum advisors, career planners or psychologists and any advice, be it academic, career-related or other, it is based solely on their experiences of being a first-year student. Therefore, referral to appropriate services is an important ongoing mentor activity. Within each of the above categories, referrals may be necessary. Mentors must realise when problems are beyond their capabilities and responsibilities and must decide which referral pathway is most appropriate.

Administrative referrals, such as the fees office or financial aid office, are often given. Mentees struggling with time management may be referred to the Student Wellness Centre which offers

workshops providing expert advice. Emotional wellbeing and academic check-ups are largely governed by the referral activities because of the significance of these problems and mentors' lack of qualifications to handle them. Mentees are referred to the Student Wellness Centre for emotional issues as well as physical health conditions. Should academic issues arise, mentees are referred to their academic tutors, course conveners, lecturers, curriculum advisors or The Writing Centre. Other referral pathways include the HIV and AIDS Unit and the Rape Crisis Centre.

At the end of each week, mentors complete reports which are sent to supervisor mentors for feedback and follow-up. Reports document each mentee's problems, any advice given, and mentors' requests for assistance from staff.

The programme activities which have been outlined here, are based on a number of assumptions. One such an assumption is that if mentors and mentees engage actively with the programme's activities, the programme will attain its short and long-term goals. These assumptions and goals are discussed in more detail in the next section.

Programme Theory

An intervention's programme theory outlines its operational strategies for achieving objectives (Rossi, Lipsey, & Freeman, 2004). The programme theory serves as a rationale for programme operations by demonstrating logical connections between programme activities and intended outcomes (Rossi et al., 2004). As such, underlying assumptions about programme operations are expressed (Rossi et al., 2004).

The HFMP does not have an established programme theory. Thus, the programme theory was elicited from the same sources which informed the programme description. Figure 1 shows the HFMP's theory of change. I drafted this programme theory and discussed it with a programme manager who confirmed that it accurately represents the programme.

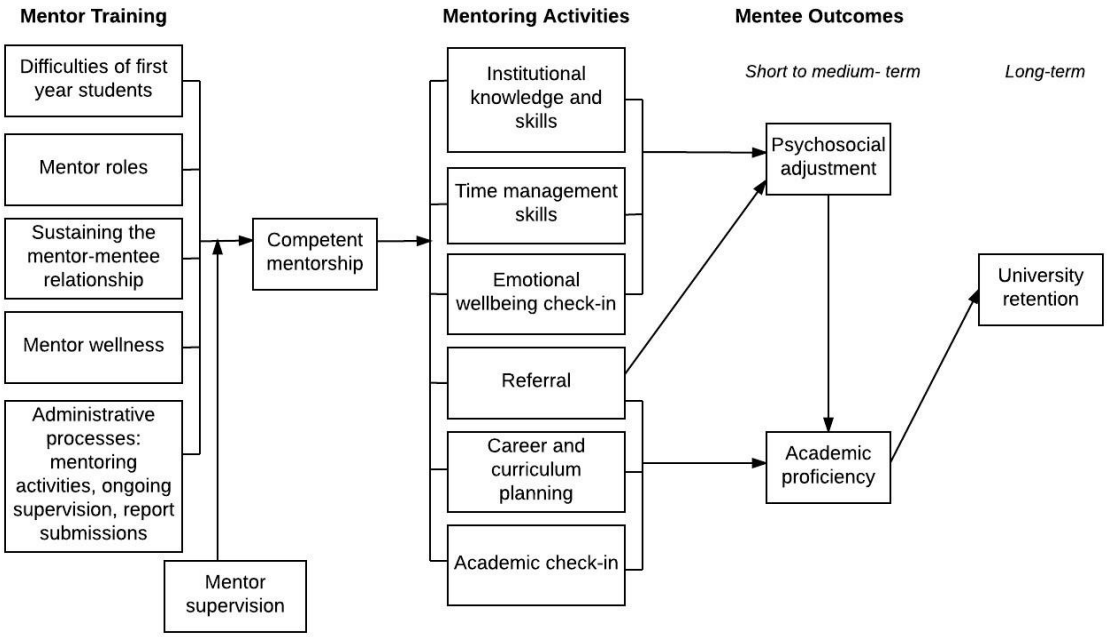

Figure 1. HFMP's theory of change

Plausibility of programme theory

The following assumptions underlie the HFMP:

1. Peer mentorship is an effective means of enhancing first year students' university experiences.

2. Mentor training and ongoing supervision can lead to competent mentorship.

3. Mentoring activities can lead to the relevant short to medium-term outcomes. Specifically, institutional knowledge and skills, time management skill development and emotional wellbeing check-ins can enhance students' psychosocial adjustment. Career and curriculum planning and academic check-ins can enhance students' academic proficiency. Referral provision can contribute to both psychosocial adjustment and academic proficiency.

4. The first short to medium-term outcome, psychosocial adjustment can contribute to the second, academic proficiency. In turn, academic proficiency can contribute to university retention as a long-term outcome.

In programme theory-driven science (Donaldson & Lipsey, 2006), evaluators assess whether a programme's theory of change is based on existing social science knowledge. A plausibility check is done to see whether the programme's activities and their assumptions will lead to the

outcomes specified. A literature review is one such a mechanism to test the plausibility of a programme theory.

I conducted such a literature review to examine the plausibility of the programme's assumptions. This was done between 3 March 2016 and 3 April 2015. Literature was found using GoogleScholar through the UCT library website with a time filter from 2006 to 2016 to ensure that articles found were not outdated. Search terms were specific to different assumptions and included the following. For examining the peer-mentoring method (Peer mentoring; "peer mentoring" AND university; Evaluation AND "undergraduate mentoring"; university AND "peer mentor*" AND adjustment; "mentor* programmes" AND undergraduate), for examining the role of mentor training and supervision (training AND mentors), for examining mentoring activities ("psychosocial adjustment" AND "first year"; "predict* academic performance" AND "first year") and for examining relationships between outcomes ("academic performance" AND retention AND predict). Some literature pertained to more than one assumption and was used accordingly. An ancestral search was used to obtain articles cited in papers read and GoogleScholar's related articles link was used. Relevant articles published before 2006 found through these methods were used. I then attempted to provide clarity relating to the plausibility of each of the four assumptions.

Is peer mentorship an effective means of enhancing first year students' university experiences?

The HFMP's basic assumption is that peer-mentoring, during the first semester, is an effective way to enhance first year students' university experiences, especially for non-traditional ED students. As the first six weeks of higher education are crucial to student adjustment and later success (Heirdsfield, Walker, & Walsh, 2007), the programme's implementation appears timely.

New students who have not met the entrance requirements, and gain entry based on bridging courses, such as those in the ED programme, require university support to enhance their transition to university and promote retention (Heirdsfield, Walker, Walsh, & Wilss, 2008). Mentorship is considered a viable, even crucial, strategy for enriching undergraduate education and promoting retention in higher education institutions (Jacobi, 1991). More specifically, university peer-mentorship is important for enhancing first year undergraduate experiences and adjustment to university (Hall & Jaugietis, 2011), especially for those deemed at risk of experiencing difficulties in their first year (Loots, 2007). In fact, peer-mentoring is considered

one of the most effective interventions for promoting vulnerable students' success and retention (Pagan & Edwards-Wilson, 2002).

University peer-mentoring is implemented for various reasons. Learning in higher education is highly influenced by students' working together so structured peer-mentorship formally utilises this to ease first year students' transition from high school to university or to help them succeed (Colvin & Ashman, 2010). Support from experienced students and connections to fellow new students promote social networking instrumental in both transition to university (Glaser, Hall, & Halperin, 2006) and retention (Heirdsfield et al., 2007). This support is arguably important for promoting psychosocial adjustment in ED students in relation to the common psychological and social problems of non-traditional students discussed.

Peer mentorship differs from traditional mentorship in which relationships are hierarchical and may be susceptible to issues of power (Bussey-Jones et al., 2006). Status equality allows for mutual and flexible relationships in which individuals are more comfortable sharing personal information and giving feedback (Bussey-Jones et al., 2006). This benefit of peer-mentoring is in line with staff's belief that peer-mentoring provides an approachable form of social support for first year students. Because of their predisposition to the problems discussed, ED students require a mentoring relationship in which they feel comfortable to discuss issues of a personal nature. Therefore, peer-mentoring could be an appropriate intervention.

Peer-mentoring programmes have enhanced psychosocial adjustment and academic performance of first year students, depending on the programme components (e.g., Fox, Stevenson, Connelly, Duff, & Dunlop, 2010; Goff, 2011; Hall & Jaugietis, 2011). Specifically, peer-mentoring is associated with academic success (Roger & Tremblay, 2003), retention and preventing the negative effects of stress (Jacobi, 1991). Peer-mentorship, as the means of enhancing non-traditional students' first year experiences, appears justified in terms of the programme's short- and medium- term outcomes, psychosocial adjustment and academic proficiency.

The way in which the mentoring relationship is formed could affect its quality and programme success. In the HFMP mentors are randomly matched with mentees while attempting to create same-gender relationships. However, there is evidence for satisfaction with systematic techniques which either allow mentees and mentors to choose each other (Thomas & Ward, 2010) or match them based on mentors' available times, career goals, subject areas of expertise, mentees' language preference (Sorrentino, 2006), background and interests (Heirdsfield et al., 2007), age and family status (Drew, Pike, Pooley, Young, & Breen, 2000).

Allowing mentors and mentees to choose each other may enhance mentee engagement by strengthening mentor-mentee connections (Thomas & Ward, 2010). Perceived input in the matching process has been linked to greater investment in the mentoring relationship as well as motivation to maximise the relationship (Allen, Eby, & Lentz, 2006). Matching based on relevant factors has resulted in many mentees' liking their mentors and feeling that the relationship was a good match (Sorrentino, 2006). Thoughtful matching might also reduce participant attrition (Glaser et al., 2006). HFMP staff may consider systematic matching techniques involving mentors and mentees in order to enhance mentoring relationships and programme outcomes.

Will mentor training and ongoing supervision lead to competent mentorship?

Mentor training and ongoing supervision is an important feature in the HFMP. Mentors attend a compulsory training day before meeting their mentees for the first time and are required to attend fortnightly supervision sessions with supervisor mentors. The aim is to ensure that mentors understand, and are competent in, their role.

Achievement of programme objectives might depend on mentoring style and role-fulfilment (Leidenfrost, Strassnig, Schabmann, Spiel, & Carbon, 2011). Therefore, mentoring quality is important and mentor training can help develop mentoring skills for programme effectiveness (Leidenfrost et al., 2011; Sanchez, Bauer, & Paronto, 2006). This might actually be the most important programme component (Thomas & Ward, 2010).

The following training elements have been identified in the literature as important for instilling necessary competencies for effective mentoring:

- Guidelines regarding the mentor-mentee relationship (Drew et al., 2000); establishing (Allen et al., 2006; Lennox Terrion, Philion, & Leonard, 2007) and sustaining it (Howlett, Tomerini, & Chandler, 2009).
- Clarification of mentors' roles and expectations (Drew et al., 2000; Heirdsfield et al., 2008; Howlett et al., 2009).
- Knowledge of university-level learning strategies (Lennox Terrion et al., 2007).
- Knowledge of university resources (Drew et al., 2000; Howlett et al., 2009; Lennox Terrion et al., 2007).
- Communication and facilitation skills (Howlett et al., 2009) and diversity training (Budge, 2006; Howlett et al., 2009).
- Tracking and documenting progress (Thomas & Ward, 2010).

- Mentor wellness (Drew et al., 2000).

High quality mentor trainings focus on developing close mentoring relationships and may be linked to increased provision of psychosocial mentoring (Allen et al., 2006; Lennox Terrion et al., 2007). Training mentors to establish rapport with their mentees is considered best practice (Thomas & Ward, 2010). Specifically, teaching mentors how to maintain their mentees' engagement and participation in the programme is important (Howlett et al., 2009). The HFMP emphasises forming and maintaining mentor-mentee relationships during training. Specifically, staff make mentors aware of potential threats to the relationship and give advice for dealing with these.

Mentors have emphasised the importance of clarifying mentor roles and expectations as well as that of boundary-setting during training (Drew et al., 2000; Howlett et al., 2009). Outlining mentor roles during training makes mentors aware of the skills they may require which can support reflection on the seriousness of the mentoring responsibility and advance commitment to that responsibility (Heirdsfield et al., 2008). The HFMP mentor training clearly discusses mentor roles and boundaries in order for mentors to understand what they should, and should not, do. For example, mentors should give mentees study tips and advise them to attend lecturer consultation times but may not edit their essays. Mentors are told to set appropriate boundaries to keep the mentoring relationship professional.

Training mentors in university-level learning strategies for meeting academic demands is important as this knowledge is used to understand mentees' difficulties (Lennox Terrion et al., 2007). Mentees may need help with study and time management skills for example (Thomas & Ward, 2010). While the HFMP mentor training focuses on common challenges of mentees, one of which is academic performance, learning strategies are not taught to mentors. Because mentors have passed through the university system, they are asked to transfer knowledge of learning strategies from their personal experience. In the case of more serious academic difficulties, referral to appropriate UCT services, such as the writing centre, is preferable. However, time management and study skill activities, which constitute university learning strategies, are conducted during supervision sessions. Programme staff should ensure that the timing of such activities equips mentors with the knowledge for transfer when it is needed.

Knowledge of university resources is another competency mentors should gain in training as it is transferred to mentees through referral provision (Lennox Terrion et al., 2007). Knowledge of support services enhances mentors' referral capabilities (Howlett et al., 2009) and students may

benefit from peer leaders' referrals to campus resources once they have been trained appropriately (Shook & Keup, 2012). Relevant agencies may speak during training to provide information on the university's counselling, academic, disability and career services (Drew et al., 2000). HFMP staff expect mentors to have some prior knowledge of university resources. While the mentor resource toolkit contains a list of these resources, there is no discussion thereof. Because referral of mentees to these services is a significant programme activity, staff may consider discussing the university resources with mentors during training or bringing in staff from these centres to do so.

Equipping mentors with skills to interact with their mentees is important. Communication skills, facilitation skills (Howlett et al., 2009) and diversity training are important (Budge, 2006; Howlett et al., 2009). Facilitation skills help mentors conduct meetings with their mentees and to manage difficult mentee behaviour (Howlett et al., 2009). Diversity training allows for cross-cultural awareness and understanding (Howlett et al., 2009), for example, with regard to minority and gender dynamics (Budge, 2006). The HFMP initial training does not provide such skill development. Supervision sessions may, depending on mentor feedback and suggestions, focus on these skills. Programme staff may consider ensuring that communication, facilitation and cross-cultural skills are taught either during the initial training or during supervision.

Mentors should provide progress reports after meeting their mentees (Budge, 2006) Thus, mentors need to be trained in tracking and documenting progress (Thomas & Ward, 2010). This allows programme staff to understand the nature of mentoring relationships, mentees' issues and whether extra support is needed. HFMP mentor training includes a discussion of administrative processes during which mentors are shown the documentation they are required to submit weekly. Staff explain how information should be recorded and submitted.

Mentor training may also include a focus on mentor wellness; self care, coping skills and recognising stress (Drew et al., 2000). Mentors should be made aware of the ongoing supervision and support available to them (Drew et al., 2000). HFMP mentor training discusses the importance of mentors' taking care of themselves in order to function optimally. Mentors are also made aware that supervisor mentors are available at supervision sessions, or by appointment, for support so that they do not feel alone in managing mentees' stress.

Ongoing faculty support for mentors is critical to mentor efficiency and programme success (Thomas & Ward, 2010). Weekly or bi-monthly meetings should be scheduled for continuing guidance and peer feedback (Budge, 2006). A shared network allows mentors to share

experiences and concerns collectively (Howlett et al., 2009). Continued assessments of mentors' needs may inform ongoing training (Thomas & Ward, 2010) and feedback meetings (Hall & Jaugietis, 2011). Fortnightly meetings with supervisor mentors provide ongoing supervision, support and training for HFMP mentors. These also serve as feedback sessions where mentors' issues may be discussed as a group.

Will mentoring activities lead to intended outcomes?

The HFMP's programme activities consist of six components expected to contribute to psychosocial adjustment, academic proficiency or both. Activities for institutional knowledge and skills, time management skill development and emotional wellbeing check-ins are expected to enhance students' psychosocial adjustment. Career and curriculum planning and academic check-ins are expected to enhance students' academic proficiency. Referral provision is intended for both psychosocial adjustment and academic proficiency.

While university peer-mentoring programmes are important (O'Brien, Llamas, & Stevens, 2012), mentoring lacks an accepted operational definition, making it difficult to understand the nature, antecedents, mediators and outcomes of mentoring relationships (Jacobi, 1991). Method, focus (Hall & Jaugietis, 2011), structure and formality vary (Hill & Reddy, 2007). This limits knowledge of mentoring processes and achievements (Berk, Berg, Mortimer, Walton-Moss, & Yeo, 2005). Programme design and implementation should be based on theoretical and empirical evidence showing how to best achieve outcomes (Hall & Jaugietis, 2011).

The literature demonstrates this inconsistency; there is little agreement, even little focus, on mentoring activities which best lead to outcomes (e.g., Budge, 2006; Husband & Jacobs, 2009). As such, this section uses the limited literature to assess interventions suggested to promote first year, particularly at-risk, students' psychosocial adjustment and academic proficiency.

The following activities may contribute to students' psychosocial adjustment:

- Sharing the institutional culture (Hall & Jaugietis, 2011).
- Counselling-based intervention (Gerdes & Mallinckrodt, 1994).

An integration and social support approach (Pearson, 1990 as cited in Hall & Jaugietis, 2011) may promote university adjustment. Supportive activities include discussing the nature of the university environment and mentors' giving advice on adjustment to this, and student rights and responsibilities and how students may make the most of their university experience. These activities contribute to programme helpfulness in terms of mentees' adjustment (Hall & Jaugietis,

2011). Institutional knowledge and skills activities in the HFMP are based mainly on practical skills rather than on university culture. Mentors show their mentees various study areas, how to gain access and how to use the resources. Computer literacy, printing and online platform skills are emphasised. While mentors make their mentees familiar with the commonly used terms at UCT, which form part of the institutional culture, activities do not encompass adjusting to the learning environment, students' rights and responsibilities or how they may make the most of their university experience. As such, the HFMP's activities for institutional knowledge and skills are more likely to lead to academic proficiency than psychosocial adjustment. Programme staff may consider expanding activities to focus on university culture. This is particularly relevant in the current climate of transformation at South African universities and could help students adjust.

Counselling academically at-risk first-year students is intended to manage feelings of nervousness and a lack of clear academic goals which are related to attrition (Gerdes & Mallinckrodt, 1994). Thus, counselling serves to enhance students' psychological adjustment and perhaps retention in the long term. Mentors in the HFMP address mentees' emotional states, such as anxiety and nerves, through emotional check-ins. Official counselling, however, is provided by qualified professionals to whom mentees are referred if need be.

The following activities are suggested to contribute to students' academic proficiency:

- Career planning and academic goal-setting (Gerdes & Mallinckrodt, 1994; Sommer & Dumont, 2011).
- Learning coping skills (Sommer & Dumont, 2011); time management skills (Gerdes & Mallinckrodt, 1994; Sommer & Dumont, 2011), study skills (Gerdes & Mallinckrodt, 1994), stress management skills (Sommer & Dumont, 2011).

Career planning and academic goal-setting may contribute to better academic performance in students who struggle academically (Gerdes & Mallinckrodt, 1994) by promoting an understanding of study motivations (Sommer & Dumont, 2011). The HFMP activities include career planning and academic goal-setting. The topics emerge through mentor-mentee discussions as well as through referral to the UCT Career Service and curriculum advisors respectively.

Various coping skills may enhance first year students' abilities to manage various university demands for improved academic performance (Sommer & Dumont, 2011). These include time management (Gerdes & Mallinckrodt, 1994; Sommer & Dumont, 2011), study skills (Gerdes &

Mallinckrodt, 1994) and stress management (Sommer & Dumont, 2011). Mentors in the HFMP teach mentees time management techniques as well as study skills, based on staff's suggestions and mentors' personal experience. Study skills are transferred during academic check-ins. Stress management is not explicitly taught to mentees, although it might be covered through emotional check-ins. Programme staff may want to consider incorporating stress management techniques into prescribed mentoring activities.

Finally, the following activity is suggested to contribute to both psychosocial adjustment and academic performance:

- Referral provision (Shook & Keup, 2012).

Peer-leaders' proximity to the student experience makes them effective referral agents (Shook & Keup, 2012). Referrals help students discover new opportunities around the university such as social or support groups or academic support services (Shook & Keup, 2012). Early referral can improve the student's overall experience by managing physical and emotional problems as well as the stress associated with the transition to university (Shook & Keup, 2012). HFMP mentors provide psychosocial and academic referrals wherever relevant university resources are more equipped to manage mentees' problems. This evidence indicates that referral provision is appropriate for promoting both psychosocial adjustment and academic proficiency.

Evidently, emotional support can enhance psychosocial adjustment in first year students and career planning, academic goal-setting and study skill advice can promote academic success. Referral provision can contribute to both psychosocial adjustment and academic proficiency. Therefore, in line with the programme theory, emotional wellbeing check-ins can promote psychosocial adjustment. Career and curriculum planning and academic check-ins can promote academic proficiency. Referrals are appropriate for promoting psychosocial adjustment and academic proficiency.

Contrary to the programme theory, activities for time management and institutional knowledge and skills are likely to lead to academic proficiency rather than psychosocial adjustment. Recommendations have been made regarding the sharing of institutional culture for psychosocial adjustment and the inclusion of stress management activities for academic performance.

Will psychosocial adjustment lead to academic proficiency? In turn, will academic proficiency lead to university retention as a long-term outcome?

The outcomes of the HFMP are based on the following two assumptions. First, it is believed that psychosocial adjustment will lead to academic proficiency and second, that academic proficiency will lead to university retention.

Non-academic factors have been argued to affect academic performance (Pritchard & Wilson, 2003). Psychosocial adjustment, made up of academic, social and personal-emotional factors, experienced by first year students may negatively affect their academic performance (Berihu, 2014).

Petersen et al. (2009) present a model for predicting academic performance of economically and educationally disadvantaged students using psychosocial variables: help-seeking, academic motivation, self-esteem, perceived stress and perceived academic workload. Sommer and Dumont (2011) tested this model and found a relationship between these psychosocial variables and academic performance, partially mediated by university adjustment. Specifically, adjustment to academic, personal and emotional university demands was related to a sense of belonging and better academic performance. It is argued elsewhere that students' emotional and social health relate to performance (Pritchard & Wilson, 2003; Pritchard & Wilson, 2007). High stress levels and social support relate to academic performance respectively (Pritchard & Wilson, 2007). Thus, psychosocial factors may influence university adjustment and resulting academic success (Sommer & Dumont, 2011). As these psychosocial adjustment-academic performance relationships are not causal, it is also possible that academic performance may influence psychosocial adjustment.

It is intuitive to think that academic proficiency will influence students retention. Indeed, poor performance is inversely correlated with retention (Gifford, Briceno-Perriot, & Mianzo, 2006). The authors found that students retained to their sophomore year had achieved significantly higher cumulative GPAs than those not retained.

Although the role of academic proficiency is evident, there may be a direct link between psychosocial adjustment and university retention for students struggling academically (Gerdes & Mallinckrodt, 1994). For these students, personal and social adjustment were found to be at least as important as academic factors for predicting student retention (Gerdes & Mallinckrodt, 1994). Specifically, satisfaction with extracurricular activities, freedom from anxiety and absence of thoughts about dropping out best predicted retention. Reported fatigue (Pritchard & Wilson,

2007) as well as social support, particularly feelings of belonging to the university and membership to social groups, can affect drop-out intentions (Nicpon et al., 2006; Pritchard & Wilson, 2007). Notably, social support and loneliness predict persistence decisions without a mediating role of academic performance (Nicpon et al., 2006). As such, psychosocial adjustment might influence university retention without the mediating role of academic proficiency.

Universities may benefit, in terms of academic success and retention, from addressing students' social and emotional health (Pritchard & Wilson, 2003; Pritchard & Wilson, 2007). The HFMP's programme theory appears to be in line with evidence for relationships between psychosocial adjustment and academic proficiency as well as between academic performance and university retention. HFMP staff may, however, consider that academic proficiency might also influence psychosocial adjustment and that psychosocial adjustment might directly influence retention.

In summary, it seems as if the programme theory of the HFMP is plausible, except for minor issues. A revised programme theory, shown in Figure 2, has been drafted based on these findings.

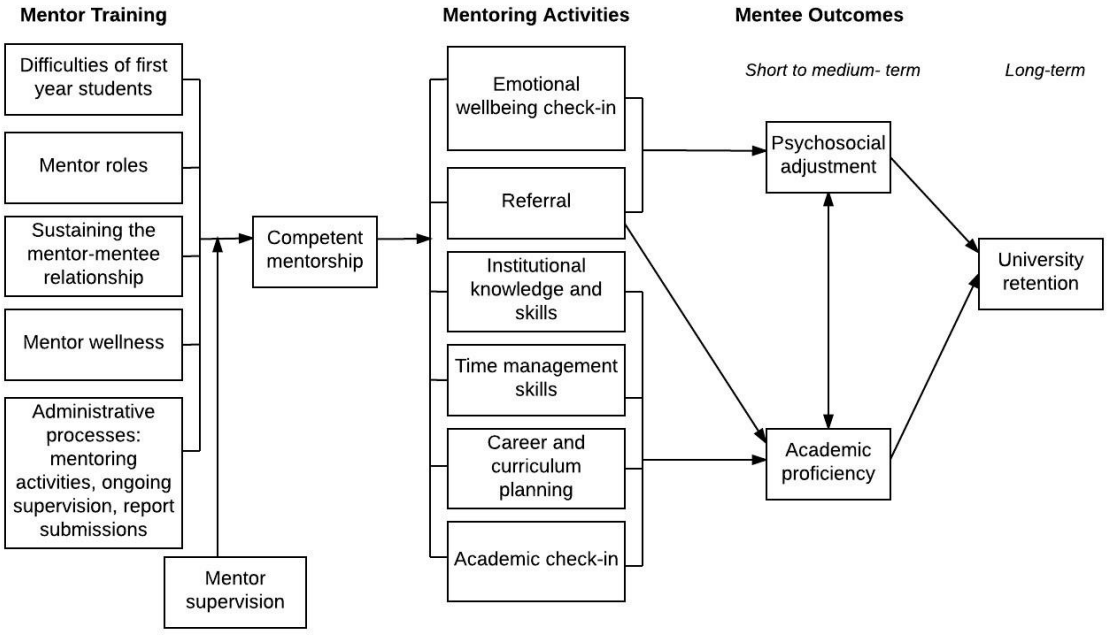

Figure 2. Revised theory of change for the HFMP

In the next section, I will use the programme theory as a basis for the evaluation questions that will be addressed in this dissertation.

Evaluation Questions

This formative evaluation seeks to improve the HFMP (Rossi et al., 2004). It consists of both process- and outcome- level assessments. Process evaluation is appropriate at the programme's operational stage to assess whether it operates as planned (Rossi et al., 2004). Once the plausibility of the programme theory is evident and the programme is considered to be well-implemented, it is meaningful to assess outcomes (Rossi et al., 2004). Outcome evaluation demonstrates whether the programme has the desired effects (Rossi et al., 2004). Using this framework and the activities and outcomes stipulated in the programme theory, process and outcome- level evaluation questions have been selected.

The process-level evaluation questions assess service utilisation, service delivery and organisational support. Service utilisation questions consider the extent to which the target population receives the intended services (Rossi et al., 2004). Service delivery questions investigate the functions involved in delivering services to beneficiaries (Rossi et al., 2004). Organisational support questions assess the human, financial or physical resources required for the programme's implementation (Rossi et al., 2004).

The service utilisation process-level evaluation questions focus on mentees' experiences and are as follows:

1. Are the actual mentees the intended target population of the HFMP?

2. Do mentees receive the intended amount of mentoring services?

3. What problems are recurrently experienced by mentees?

4. Are mentees satisfied with the mentoring they receive?

The service delivery process-level evaluation questions relate to mentor roles and are as follows:

5. Are mentors sufficiently involved in the mentoring process?

6. Is mentor training content useful to mentors in their mentoring relationships?

7. What assistance do mentors request from programme staff?

8. To which services do mentors refer their mentees?

The organisational support process-level evaluation questions are as follows:

9. Does the programme receive sufficient funding?

10. Is programme staffing sufficient for performing intended functions?

The outcome-level evaluation questions are as follows:

11. Do ED mentees demonstrate adequate psychosocial adjustment by the end of the programme?

12. Are ED mentees academically proficient by the end of the programme?

13. Do ED mentees demonstrate greater academic proficiency than non-mentored students?

14. Do ED mentees who attend more of the programme demonstrate greater academic proficiency?

15. Do ED mentees remain enrolled at UCT at the start of the second semester?

The methods for answering these questions will be discussed in the next chapter.

Method

In this chapter I present how I will answer the evaluation questions formulated in the previous chapter. It should be noted that the evaluation questions are divided into process and outcome questions.

Research Design

Three designs were used in this evaluation: a descriptive design for the process questions as well as a post-test only quasi-experimental single-group and a matched non-equivalent group design for the outcome questions.

Process evaluation

The process-level evaluation questions were answered using a descriptive design. Descriptive designs are non-experimental and describe the current state of phenomena to provide broad insight into the topic (Salkind, 2012). This was appropriate for the process evaluation as it seeks to provide insight into the state of programme implementation.

Outcome evaluation

To answer the outcome evaluation questions pertaining to mentees' psychosocial adjustment and academic proficiency, a single-group quasi-experimental post-test only design was used. This design entails collection of post-test data after exposure to the intervention (Kirk, 1982). The group consisted of two sub-groups, namely ED and Mainstream HFMP mentees. Single-group designs are the simplest form of outcome evaluation and are appropriate as a first step in assessing whether outcomes were achieved and the programme's usefulness (Posavac & Carey, 2007).

Furthermore, a post-test only quasi-experimental non-equivalent group design, using matching, was used to assess whether ED mentees' psychosocial adjustment, academic outcomes, and retention were better than those of a comparison group of Mainstream students. This comparison group was matched with ED programme participants based on their Faculty Points Score (FPS). Acceptance into the ED programme is based on a FPS between three-hundred-and-eighty and four-hundred as the criterion for entrance into mainstream programmes is four-hundred points. Humanities Mainstream students in various degree programmes, whose FPS fell between four-hundred and four-hundred-and-twenty, were selected to form the comparison group. This twenty-point range served to support comparability on university preparedness between ED mentees and comparison students. The psychosocial adjustment and university

retention outcomes could not be assessed using this design as the comparison group's response rates were too low on the psychosocial adjustment questionnaire and retention data were not available.

Degree programme was not used as a matching variable because students in their first year do not necessarily take subjects from their selected major. ED students are required to take foundation courses before beginning some majors. Thus degree programme is not an appropriate matching variable. University preparedness, represented by FPS, is believed to be key in psychosocial adjustment, academic proficiency and university retention. Thus outcome differences will, to some extent, demonstrate the programme's effect.

Participants

There were five groups of participants in this evaluation. First, all HFMP mentors participated. Secondly, programme staff participated. Thirdly, both ED and voluntary Mainstream mentees participated. The fifth group constituted a comparison group of mainstream students who fell just above the cut-off for acceptance into the ED programme. Table 1 shows the number of participants in each group.

Table 1

Participants in the Evaluation

Type of participant	*n*
Intervention group:	
Programme staff	3
Mentors	74
Mentees:	491
ED students	270
Mainstream students	214
Comparison group:	
Non-mentored Mainstream students just above Humanities FPS cut-off	82

Measures and Procedures

Table 2 illustrates the materials and data providers relevant to answering each evaluation question. The use of secondary data as well as the materials for primary data collection will be described in more detail below.

Table 2

Evaluation Questions, Materials and Data Providers

Evaluation Questions	Materials	Data Providers
Process evaluation		
Service utilisation:		
1. Are the actual mentees the intended target population of the HFMP?	Programme records	Programme staff
2. Do mentees receive the intended amount of mentoring services?	Weekly mentor reports	Mentors
3. What problems are recurrently experienced by mentees?	Weekly mentor reports	Mentors
4. Are mentees satisfied with the mentoring they receive?	Mentee Satisfaction Questionnaire*	Mentees
Service delivery:		
5. Are mentors sufficiently involved in the mentoring process?	Weekly mentor reports Supervision session attendance records	Mentors Programme staff
6. Is mentor training content useful to mentors in their mentoring relationships	Mentor Training Questionnaire*	Mentors
7. What assistance do mentors request from programme staff?	Weekly mentor reports	Mentors
8. To which services do mentors refer their mentees?	Weekly mentor reports	Mentors
Organisational support:		
9. Does the programme receive sufficient funding?	Programme records Brief structured discussion*	Programme staff
10. Is programme staffing sufficient for performing intended functions?	Brief structured discussion*	Programme staff
Outcome evaluation		
11. Do ED mentees demonstrate adequate psychosocial adjustment by the end of the programme?	Adapted Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire*	Mentees and comparison group
12. Are ED mentees academically proficient by the end of the programme?	University records	Faculty representative
13. Do ED mentees demonstrate greater academic proficiency than non-mentored students?	University records	Faculty representative
14. Do ED mentees who attend more of the programme demonstrate greater academic proficiency?	Weekly mentor reports University records	Mentors Faculty representative
15. Do ED mentees remain enrolled at UCT at the start of the second semester?	University records	Faculty representative

* Primary data collected by evaluator

Process evaluation

Secondary data used to answer the process-level questions were supplied by programme staff between May and June. Only the evaluator had access to these data and the evaluator anonymised participants.

A brief discussion with the two programme administrators addressed organisational resources, specifically, the programme's funding and staffing. Primary data were collected using two questionnaires, designed by the evaluator, assessing mentees' satisfaction with the mentoring they received and the usefulness of mentor training respectively. These were posted on Vula for online completion at the beginning of the second semester.

Mentee satisfaction was measured using a nine-item, five-point Likert-type scale with items presented in Table 3. Overall quality of the mentoring relationship was anchored by *poor* to *excellent* and the six items assessing the usefulness of each mentoring activity were anchored by *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. Whether the mentee would recommend the programme to a friend is anchored by *yes* to *no*. An open-ended question, using a textbox, asks the mentee whether he/she would recommend any changes to the programme. Lastly, the mentee is required to select whether he/she is an ED (4-year) or mainstream (3-year) student.

Table 3
Mentee Satisfaction Questionnaire

Items
1. Please rate the overall quality of the relationship your mentor developed with you.
2. Think about the usefulness of the various mentoring activities and click the block which best reflects your opinion.
a. Becoming familiar with university resources, such as Library/computer lab, Vula, UCT email, university support services, was useful.
b. Time management activities such as scheduling, organising and prioritising were useful
c. Emotional support from mentors was useful.
d. Career and curriculum planning, including hearing mentors' experience, thinking about your future, setting goals was useful.
e. Academic support from mentors, such as study tips, examination advice, help with specific academic concerns was useful.
f. Referral to UCT services, such as Career Service, Curriculum Advisors, Student Wellness, Writing Centre, fees office, financial aid office etc., Was useful.
3. Would you recommend the mentorship programme to a friend?
4. If you could recommend any changes to the programme, what would those be?

Usefulness of mentor training was measured using an eight-item, five-point Likert-type scale with items presented in Table 4. Agreement as to the usefulness of each training component, as well as supervision sessions, was anchored by *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. Two open-ended questions, using textboxes, asked mentors which supervision session topics were most useful and whether they would recommend any changes to the training programme.

Table 4

Mentor Training Questionnaire

Items
1. To what extent were the following mentor training components useful in terms of your experience of mentoring?
a. Learning about the common difficulties first-year students experience was useful
b. Learning about mentor roles and responsibilities was useful
c. Learning how to sustain the mentor-mentee relationship was useful
d. Learning the importance of mentor wellness was useful
e. Learning about administrative procedures: mentoring activities, supervision and reporting was useful
f. Additional learning and discussions in supervision sessions was useful
2. Which topics of the supervision sessions did you find most useful?
3. If you could recommend any changes to the mentor training programme, what would that be?

Outcome evaluation

ED mentees' academic proficiency was assessed using secondary data collected from the Humanities Faculty at the beginning of the second semester. These data belong to UCT.

Primary data were collected to assess psychosocial adjustment at the beginning of the second semester. The beginning of second semester was selected as the data collection point, rather than directly after the programme, to represent longer-lasting outcomes. Psychosocial adjustment was measured using an adapted version of Baker and Siryk's (1984) Student Adaption to College Questionnaire (SACQ) (Petersen, 2006). The SACQ is based on the assumption that university adjustment is multifaceted due to varying types of demands (Beyers & Goossens, 2002). Adjustment is therefore measured along four sub-scales; personal-emotional, social, academic and institutional attachment (Baker & Siryk, 1989 as cited in Beyers & Goossens, 2002). Based on the observation of mentor training and discussions with staff, the sub-scales deemed relevant to the psychosocial adjustment outcome were personal-emotional adjustment (15 items) and social adjustment (20 items). An adapted version of the SACQ, made up of these two sub-scales, was used (see Appendix A for questionnaire). The adapted scale was anchored by *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*.

Personal-emotional adjustment refers to general psychological distress and somatic symptoms thereof (Petersen, 2006). Low scores on this scale indicate poorer psychological wellbeing as well as fewer coping resources (Baker & Siryk, 1989 as cited in Petersen, 2006). Social adjustment refers to students' ability to manage interpersonal and societal experiences at university (Petersen, 2006). Internal consistency of the personal-emotional and social sub-scales is good (alpha coefficients of .81 and .84 respectively) (Baker & Siryk, 1989 as cited in Gerdes & Mallinckrodt, 1994). The adapted SACQ was posted on Vula for participants to complete online.

The Ethics in Research Committee of the Commerce Faculty provided ethics clearance for this evaluation.

Data Analysis

Process evaluation

The process-level data were analysed using descriptive statistics, specifically means and standard deviations. Qualitative methods, such as thematic abstraction and simple frequency of mention, were used to analyse data from open-ended questionnaire items, mentor reports and the brief structured discussion.

Outcome evaluation

Nineteen items on the psychosocial adjustment questionnaire were reverse-coded. Median scores for each participant were calculated for overall psychosocial adjustment as well as for the personal and social subscales. This allowed for the removal of the two items with an N/A option. The median also best represents participants' range of item responses. Descriptive statistics were then used to assess mentees' psychosocial adjustment.

Descriptive statistics were also used to assess whether ED mentees were academically proficient. The academic proficiency data were not normally distributed and various data trimming and transformations were unsuccessful. Therefore, academic performance for ED mentees and the matched comparison group was compared using a Mann-Whitney non-parametric test. In addition, correlation and regression analyses were used to ascertain the relationship between mentoring session attendance and GPA for ED mentees in order to link programme dosage to academic outcomes. Bootstrapping with 95% confidence intervals was used for the bivariate correlation because the assumption of normality was violated, yet the sample was relatively large.

Retention could not be analysed because data were not available until the end of the academic year.

All quantitative analyses were conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics using .05 significance levels.

Results

Process Evaluation

Service utilisation

Before reporting the results for this section, I would like to draw attention to the variability in sample size for each evaluation question. Figure 3 indicates this variability.

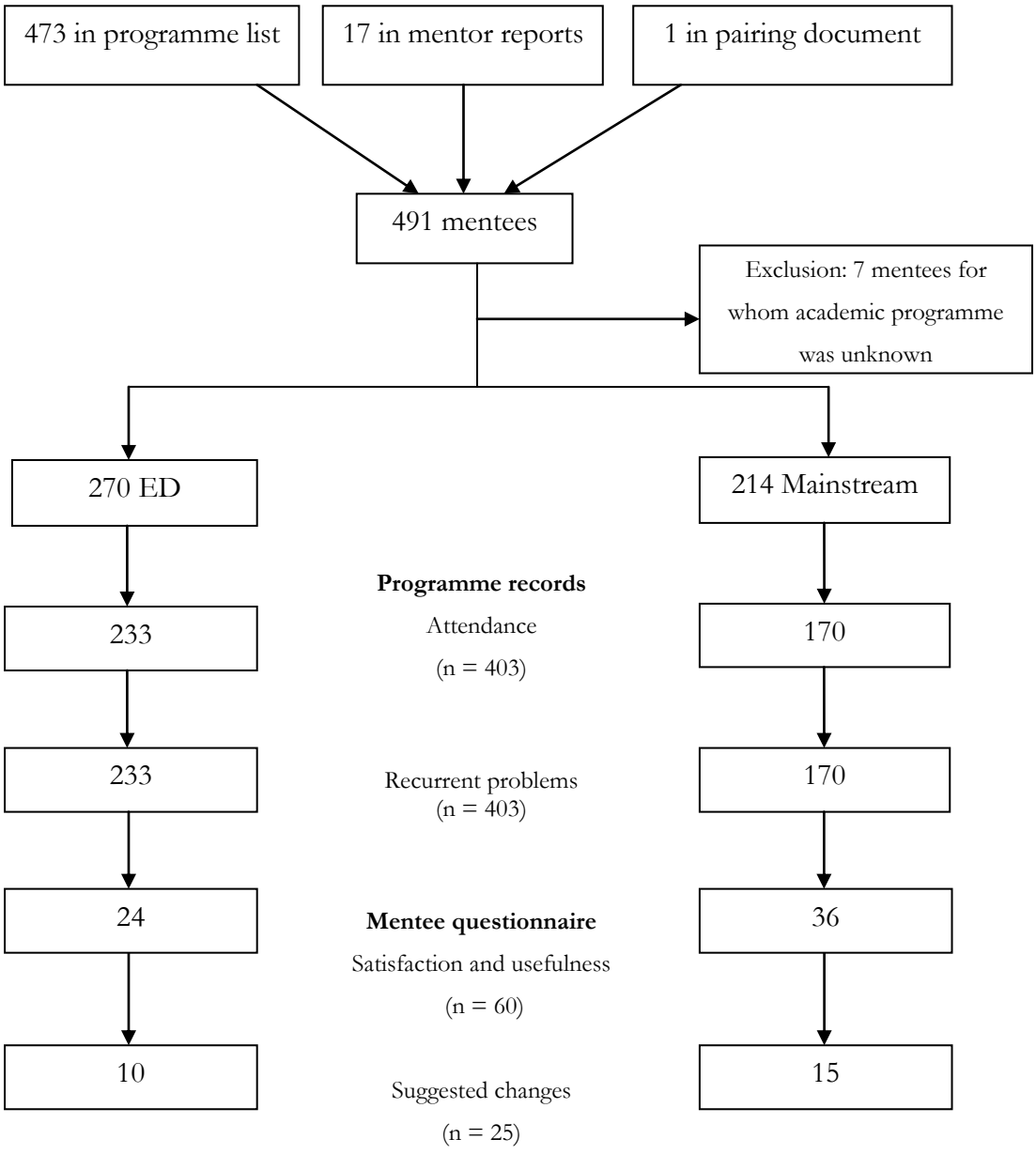

Figure 3. Sample sizes for service utilisation questions

1. Are the actual mentees the intended target population of the HFMP?

The programme's intended target population is primarily first-year Humanities ED students for whom participation is mandatory. First-year Mainstream students may participate voluntarily. A total of four-hundred-and-ninety-one mentees were enrolled in the programme; two-hundred-and-seventy of these were ED students (55.0%) and two-hundred-and-fourteen were mainstream students (43.6%). Academic programme for the remaining 7 mentees is unknown.

2. Do mentees receive the intended amount of mentoring services?

The total number of planned sessions for the first semester was thirteen. Mentees' session attendance (n = 410) ranged from 0 to 13 sessions with an average of 5.70 sessions (SD = 3.465) and a mode of 8 sessions (12.7%). Two-hundred-and-eighteen mentees (53.2%) attended less than 50% of the sessions.

Attendance was also analysed according to academic programme (n = 403). Mainstream mentees (n = 170) attended an average of 5.61 sessions (SD = 3.565) with a median of 5 sessions and a modal average of 9 sessions (11.2%). Ninety-eight Mainstream mentees (57.6%) attended less than 50% of the sessions. ED mentees (n = 233) attended an average of 5.91 sessions (SD = 3.342) with a median of 7 sessions and a mode of 8 sessions (15.0%). One-hundred-and-thirteen (48.5%) ED mentees attended less than 50% of the sessions. Figure 4 shows that ED mentees tended toward slightly greater attendance.

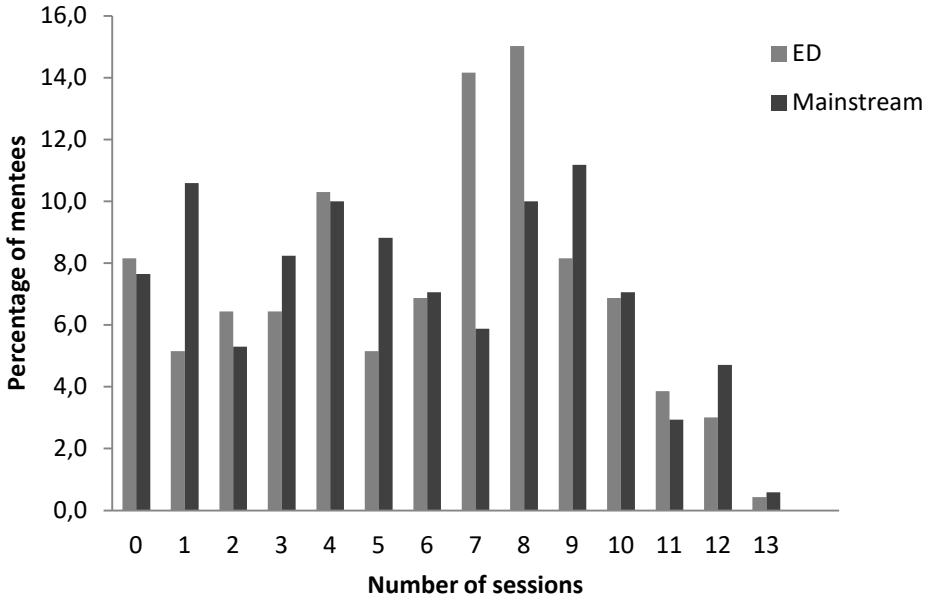

Figure 4. Mainstream and ED mentee attendance

3. What problems are recurrently experienced by mentees?

Recurrent problems were extracted from the available mentor reports. The average number of problems experienced by each mentee (n = 410) during the first semester was 1.78 (SD = 1.629) with a mode of 0 problems. Mainstream mentees (n = 170) each had an average of 1.74 problems (SD = 1.708), a median of 1 problem and a mode of 0 problems (30.0%). ED mentees (n = 233) each had an average of 1.84 problems (SD = 1.559), a median of 2 problems and a mode of 2 problems (25.8%).

Table 5 shows the problems experienced by an arbitrary cut-off of at least thirty mentees and how many mentees experienced each one. The table also shows the number of mentees experiencing each problem who are ED mentees. Problems experienced by fewer than thirty mentees would be idiosyncratic data.

Table 5

Mentees' Recurrent Problems

Problem	Number of Mentees Experiencing Problem (n = 410)	Number of Those Experiencing Problem Who Are ED
Academic	245 (59.8%)	146 (59.6%)
Coursework management	98 (23.9%)	47 (48.0%)
Test/assignment stress	95 (23.2%)	64 (67.4%)
Time management	67 (16.3%)	36 (53.7%)
Curriculum issues	58 (14.1%)	36 (62.1%)
Academic writing/referencing	56 (13.7%)	30 (53.6%)
Psychosocial	114 (27.8%)	62 (54.4%)
Personal issues[a]	36 (8.8%)	14 (44.4%)
Institutional Knowledge	90 (22.0%)	58 (64.4%)
Campus facilities and resources[b]	75 (18.3%)	50 (66.7%)

[a]Home stress, pressure of being at UCT, depression, anxiety, pregnancy, grief, other unstated.

[b]Library navigation, library resources, printing facilities, Eduroam, Vula, Peoplesoft, email, UCT offices, Jammie Shuttle services.

The most recurrent category of problems mentees experienced was academic and specifically coursework management and test/assignment stress. Academic problems were experienced by 62.7% of ED mentees. Each problem, except for coursework management and personal issues, was experienced by more ED mentees than Mainstream mentees.

4. Are mentees satisfied with the mentoring they receive?

Sixty mentees responded to the mentee satisfaction questionnaire. On average, mentees rated the quality of their relationships with their mentors between average and good (M = 3.97, SD = 1.025). The median and mode (38.3%) were both 4, indicating a rating of good.

The questionnaire asked mentees to rate the extent to which they found the mentoring activities useful. Table 6 shows the average agreement ratings as to the usefulness of each mentoring activity. Mentees who chose N/A for an item were excluded from the analysis because it is likely they did not take part in the activity concerned.

Table 6

Mentees' Perceived Usefulness of Each Mentoring Activity

Mentoring activity	N	M	Mode (% mentees)
Activities for institutional knowledge and skills	59	4.41	5 (50.0%)
Time management activities	59	3.90	4 (40.0%)
Emotional support	55	3.96	5 (35.0%)
Career and curriculum planning	54	4.20	4 (45.0%)
Academic support	57	4.32	4 (45.0%)
Referrals to UCT services	58	4.41	5 (48.3%)

Forty-nine respondents (81.7%) said that they would recommend the programme to a friend. Four (6.7%) said they would not while 7 (11.7%) said they were not sure. Regardless of whether they would recommend it or not, twenty-five respondents suggested changes to the programme. Table 7 shows the frequency of suggestions, using an arbitrary cut off of three mentees as suggestions from fewer mentees represent idiosyncratic data.

Table 7

Mentee's Suggested Changes to Programme

Suggested change	Number of mentees (n = 25)
Meet less often	7
Meet more often	4
Match mentees and mentors with the same majors	3
More dedication and consistency of mentors' communication	3

In summary, the results indicated that, while the intended target population of ED students were mentees in the programme, almost half of the beneficiaries were Mainstream students. Session attendance was generally low with most mentees attending fewer than half the intended sessions. Recurrent mentee problems fell within academic, psychosocial and institutional knowledge categories. It is important to note that the reliability of attendance and recurrent problem data is questionable because mentors did not complete all required reports. Thus, data may be missing. In general, mentees were satisfied with their mentoring relationships and activities and most would recommend the programme to a friend.

Service delivery

Mentor involvement, assistance requests and referral data lack reliability due to incomplete mentor reports. However, mentor reports were the best available measure of service delivery. The variability in sample size for this section is outlined in Figure 5.

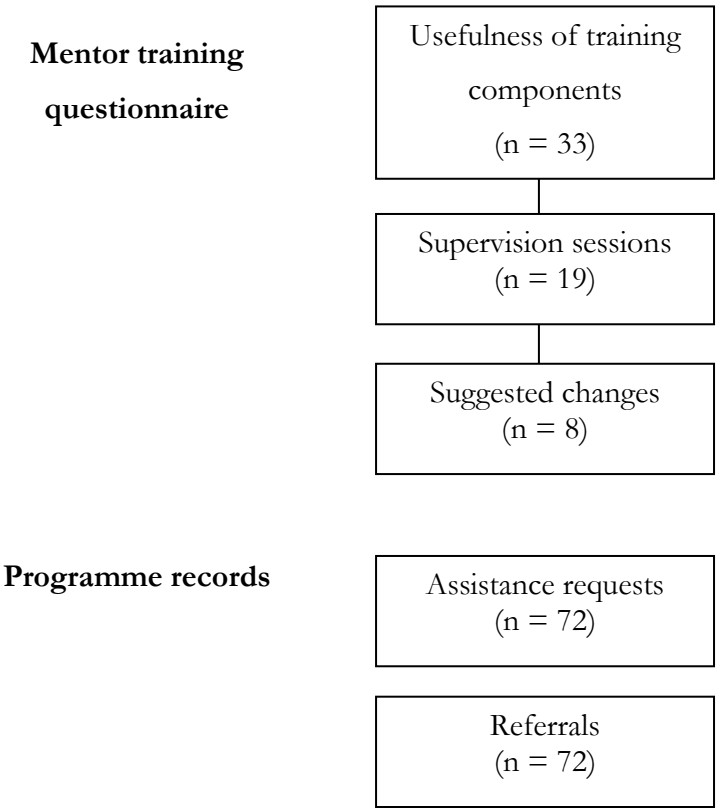

Figure 5. Sample sizes for service delivery questions

5. Are mentors sufficiently involved in the mentoring process?

The indicators used to answer this question were the number of weekly reports submitted, out of a total of thirteen, the number of assigned mentees omitted from reports and the percentage of supervision sessions attended. While the intended number of supervision sessions was 7, the number of sessions held for each supervision group ranged from 3 to 6 so percentage attendance is analysed.

Table 8 shows mentor involvement in terms of each indicator. Attendance data were missing for one mentor and was excluded from analysis.

Table 8

Mentor Involvement

Indicator	N	Mean (SD)	Mode
Number of mentor reports submitted per mentor	74	9.89 (3.309)	12
Number of assigned mentees omitted from reports	74	.70 (1.236)	0
Percentage supervision sessions attended	73	74.04 (25.32)	-

6. Is mentor training content useful to mentors in their mentoring relationships?

Table 9 shows mentors' average agreement ratings as to the usefulness of the each training component.

Table 9

Mentors' Perceived Usefulness of Each Training Component

Training component	N	M	Mode (% respondents)
Learning about common first year difficulties	33	4.15	4 (66.7%)
Learning about mentor roles and responsibilities	33	4.48	5 (51.5%)
Learning how to sustain the mentor-mentee relationship	32	4.19	4 (45.5%)
Learning the importance of mentor wellness	33	4.24	4 (60.6%)
Learning about administrative procedures	33	4.03	4 (45.5%)
Additional learning and discussions in supervision sessions	32	3.78	4 (48.5%)

Using the midpoint of the Likert scale as an arbitrary cut-off, mentors perceived all of the training components to be useful. Learning about mentor roles and responsibilities appears to have been the most useful component.

The questionnaire asked mentors who found supervision sessions useful which discussions were most useful. Table 10 shows the aspects of supervision sessions which mentors found helpful and how many mentioned each one, using an arbitrary cut-off of two mentors because one is idiosyncratic.

Table 10

Useful Aspects of Mentor Supervision Sessions

Supervision aspect	Number of mentors (n = 19)
Collective problem solving	6
Mentor wellness	4
Mentee relations	4
Supervisor mentor's support	2
Time management activities	2

Mentors were also asked if they would make any changes to the mentor training curriculum. Table 11 shows suggested changes and how many mentors suggested each change, using an arbitrary cut-off of two mentors as suggestions from any fewer mentors would represent idiosyncratic data.

Table 11

Mentors' Suggested Changes to the Mentor Training Curriculum

Suggested change	Number of mentors (n = 8)
Initial training over more than one day	2
Workshops and training for mentors and mentees together	2
Information about UCT services	2

7. What assistance do mentors request from programme staff?

Table 12 shows mentor requests for assistance from programme staff and how many mentors requested each type, using an arbitrary cut-off of three mentors from requests from any fewer mentors would represent idiosyncratic data.

Table 12

Assistance Requests from Mentors

Assistance requested	Number of mentors (n = 72)
Support in Mentoring Role	
Query about mainstream mentoring	3
Mentee relations	15
Administrative assistance	
Contact unresponsive mentee	24
Mentee information[a]	9
Check-in with mentee	7
Assistance for Specific Issue	
Academic[b]	11
UCT facilities	11
Housing	9
Curriculum	7
Counselling	6
Funding	4

[a]UCT enrolment status, status in programme, contact information.

[b]Contact department, help for mentee.

8. To which services do mentors refer their mentees?

Table 13 shows the UCT services to which at least ten mentors referred their mentees, as a frequency of ten was considered significant relative to the data, as well as the number of mentors who referred to each service.

Table 13

Mentor Referrals

Service	Number of mentors who referred (n = 72)
Lecturer/tutor	49 (68.1%)
Writing Centre	37 (51.4%)
Curriculum advisor	27 (37.0%)
Student Wellness Centre	24 (32.9%)
Career Services	19 (26.0%)
Societies office	13 (18.1%)
EDU Junior Research Fellow & Curriculum Advisor	12 (16.4%)
Financial aid resources	11 (15.0%)

For this service delivery section, it appears that many mentors failed to submit all the required reports and to include all mentees assigned to them, which accounts for the reliability issues in both the service utilisation and service delivery data. On average, mentors attended supervision sessions regularly. On average, mentors perceived all mentor training components as useful and learning about mentor roles and responsibilities as most useful. Useful aspects of supervision and suggested changes to the training curriculum were assessed as were assistance requests and referrals given.

Organisational support

9. Does the programme receive sufficient funding?

The total budget for the 2016 rollout was R226 422 which includes operating budget as well as staff salaries (Faculty staff member, personal communication, August 1, 2016). According to one of the programme managers, the bulk of the budget was spent on the mentor training event, the welcome back event at the beginning of second semester, any additional planned events during the year as well as stationery provisions. Spending decisions were based on previous years and the budget available and there were no issues with the budget or accessing it (Manager, personal communication, July 18, 2016). It is concluded that the programme received sufficient funding.

10. Is programme staffing sufficient for performing intended functions?

Staffing was investigated for various positions, namely student development officers (SDOs), supervisor mentors and mentors.

The SDO resigned at the beginning of the programme and, according to one of the programme managers, this caused some problems as the SDO's job is multidimensional. There was no official authority to oversee the programme, to liaise between university administrative departments and the programme and to sign off on decisions. The Humanities Faculty's Coordinator of Undergraduate Affairs was appointed temporarily to oversee the programme in the absence of a SDO. However, according to one programme manager, managing this transition proved difficult (Manager, personal communication, July 18, 2016).

One important SDO role is providing mentees with psychosocial support beyond mentors' capacity and providing referrals to appropriate services. In the absence of a SDO, mentees were referred to The Student Wellness Centre. However, this service is overburdened. Because of this lack of resources, psychosocial support for mentees fell short of intended quality (Manager, personal communication, July 18, 2016).

Previously the SDO also acted as a liaison between the programme and the EDU in terms of communication regarding ED students. Despite the meeting between the EDU and programme staff at the end of the first semester, ongoing communication was ineffective. For example, the programme managers were informed of the number of ED students late in the first semester which then affected programme enrolment and dosage. Programme staff were unsure of the boundaries of EDU support as well as the EDU structure in terms of with whom they should correspond (Manager, personal communication, July 18, 2016).

This year, there were four supervisor mentors; the two programme managers and two counsellors outsourced from The Student Wellness Centre. The programme manager argues that it would be more effective to assign supervision roles only to programme managers because they are completely involved in the programme (Manager, personal communication, July 18, 2016). While the two external supervisor mentors provided excellent support for mentors, because they did not work full-time on the programme, there were occasional communication issues (Manager, personal communication, September 1, 2016).

Delayed knowledge of the number of ED students and opening enrolment to mainstream students contributed to assigning more than the intended five mentees to each mentor. The

programme manager noted that opening the programme to Mainstream students could flood the programme unexpectedly (Manager, personal communication, July 18, 2016). The average number of mentees assigned to each mentor was 6.30, with a maximum of 10. It seems there were too few mentors for the total number of mentees. The acceptance rate for mentor applicants is 95% to 99% so the programme manager explained that recruitment stages should emphasise the intangible incentives associated with peer-mentoring in order to attract more applications (Manager, personal communication, July 18, 2016).

This section shows that, while there were no problems with funding, there were various staffing issues. The vacancy of the SDO position, external supervisor roles and the number of mentors threatened mentor support and service provision.

Outcome Evaluation

These questions were answered using primary data collected by the evaluator and secondary data accessed through the Faculty.

11. Do ED mentees demonstrate adequate psychosocial adjustment by the end of the programme?

Sixty mentees responded to the psychosocial questionnaire; twenty-four ED and thirty-six Mainstream. Table 14 shows the average scores on psychosocial adjustment for all mentees according to academic programme.

Table 14

Average Scores on Overall Scale, Personal, and Social Subscales

	All mentees (n = 60)		ED (n = 24)		Mainstream (n = 36)	
	M (SD)	Mode (%)	*M (SD)*	Mode (%)	*M (SD)*	Mode (%)
Overall psychosocial adjustment	3.63 (.71)	4 (46.7)	3.67 (.55)	4 (54.2)	3.61 (.81)	4 (41.7)
Personal subscale	3.44 (.89)	4 (35.0)	3.38 (.91)	4 (37.5)	3.49 (.89)	4 (33.3)
Social subscale	3.61 (.77)	4 (45.0)	3.56 (.61)	4 (45.8)	3.64 (.86)	4 (44.4)

Using the scale midpoint of 2.5 to indicate psychosocial adjustment, all mentees in both groups displayed adequate psychosocially adjustment on the overall, personal and social scales.

12. Are ED mentees academically proficient by the end of the programme?

Using the 50% pass mark as a cut off, ED mentees (n = 249) were, on average, academically proficient at the end of the first semester (M = 56.48, SD = 11.24). Figure 6 shows the frequency distribution of GPAs for the mentored ED group.

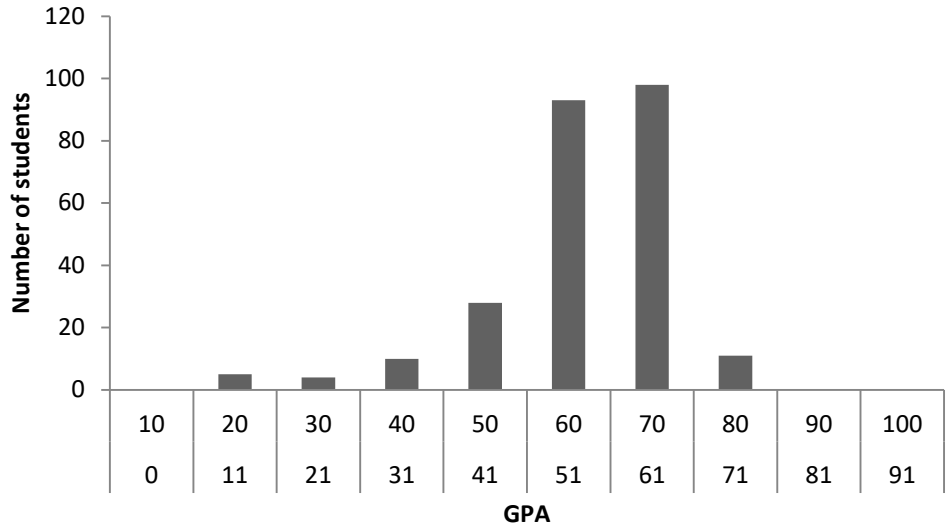

Figure 6. Frequency distribution of ED students' GPA scores

13. Do ED mentees demonstrate greater academic proficiency than non-mentored students?

Descriptive statistics suggest that there is a trend toward higher marks for the mentored ED group (n = 249, M = 56.48, SD = 11.24) than the comparison group (n = 82, M = 49.86, SD = 12.07). As seen in Figure 7 below, the ED mentored group had a higher median GPA score (Mdn = 58.28) and inter-quartile range than the comparison group (Mdn = 53.25).

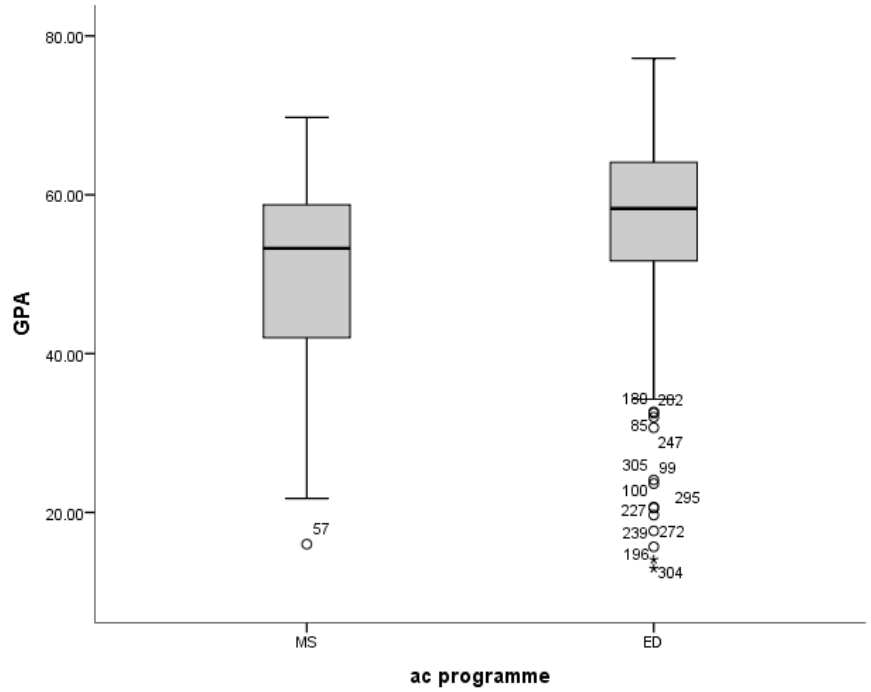

Figure 7. Box-plots showing the distribution of GPA scores

A Mann-Whitney test indicated that GPA scores were significantly higher for ED students (*Mdn* = 58.28) than for Mainstream students (*Mdn* = 53.25), *U* = 6622, *p* < .001, *r* = .26. This effect size shows a small to medium effect.

14. Do ED mentees who attend more of the programme demonstrate greater academic proficiency?

Correlation and linear regression analyses were conducted to investigate the relationship between programme attendance and GPA scores for 204 ED students. There was a significant weak positive relationship between students' session attendance and their GPA scores, *r* = .172 [.025, .308], *p* = .014. The confidence intervals for the correlation coefficient, which are unaffected by the distribution of the data (Field, 2013), were both above zero so confidence is maintained that a similar relationship exists in the population. The linear regression model confirmed that session attendance significantly predicted GPA scores, F(1,202) = 6.131, p = .014, where attendance explained approximately 3% of the variance. Figure 8 shows the relationship between session attendance, as the predictor, and GPA.

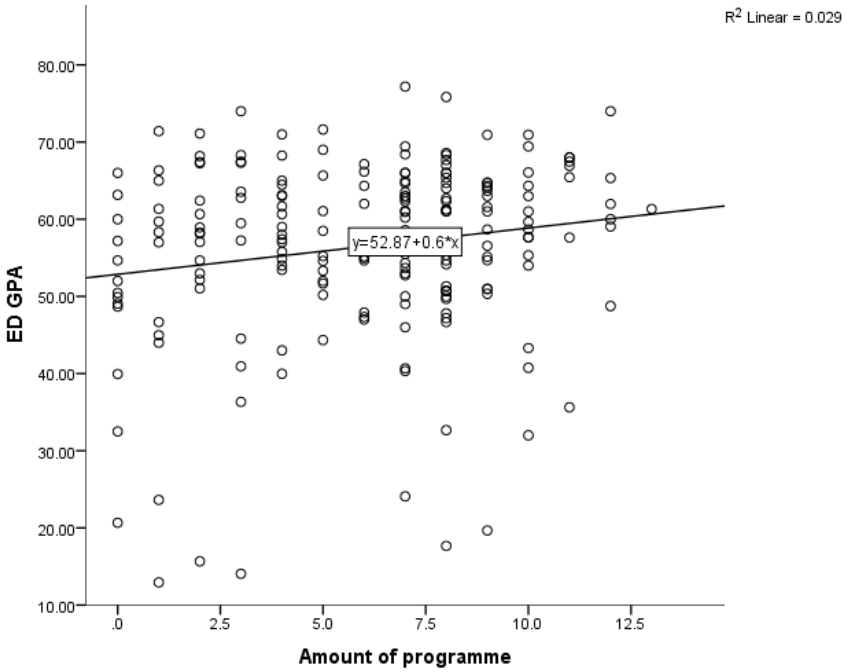

Figure 8. Scatterplot showing the linear relationship between number of sessions attended and GPA

15. Do ED mentees remain enrolled at UCT at the start of the second semester?

This question could not be answered because data were not available from the programme or the Faculty at the time of analysis. These data are only collated at the end of the academic year.

In summary, and in terms of participants' outcomes, all mentees showed adequate psychosocial adjustment. ED mentees demonstrated academic proficiency and had significantly higher GPAs after the first semester than those in the non-mentored matched comparison group.

These results will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

Discussion

This chapter is structured using the evaluation questions as sub-sections. In addition, suggestions for programme improvement, recommendations for future evaluation, limitations of the evaluation and the evaluation's contribution are presented.

Process Evaluation

Service utilisation

1. Are the actual mentees the intended target population of the HFMP?

While the target population of the HFMP is primarily first-year Humanities ED students, for whom participation is mandatory, just over half of the programme participants were from this group. The remaining mentees were first-year Humanities Mainstream students. Although more students from the primary target group do participate, the large proportion of Mainstream students enrolled could be an issue.

Programmes often aim to provide services to a very large proportion of a target population (Rossi et al., 2004); in this case, all Humanities first-year students. However, usually these programmes do not have sufficient resources to provide for more than a proportion of that target population (Rossi et al., 2004). Over-coverage is possible whereby a programme exceeds its target population (Rossi et al., 2004). The inclusion of Mainstream students on a voluntary basis, and the evidently significant uptake, could waste programme resources as these students are more likely not predisposed to the issues which ED students face.

Mainstream participants may utilise more resources, such as mentor time and effort, because they have volunteer characteristics. They may desire more attention, using programme resources without necessarily needing them. Alternatively, Mainstream participants may volunteer in case they need a mentor and, once they feel secure in their university experience, may disengage. This could also waste programme resources, specifically mentors' time and effort spent contacting and meeting with disengaged Mainstream mentees. This over-coverage could also hinder the programme's ability to equalise university adjustment between ED and Mainstream students by giving Mainstream students a further advantage (Rossi et al., 2004).

It was difficult to find clear answers to this question within the data as the programme's participant records were inconsistent. While the initial document contained four-hundred-and-seventy-three mentees, additional mentees were found in mentor reports and the mentor-

mentee pairing document. This pairing document only contained four-hundred-and-forty-one mentees. Thus, it is unclear whether staff knew how many mentees were enrolled, had assigned each mentee to a mentor and could keep track of each mentee's progress. It is possible that the large number of participants, resulting from opening the programme to Mainstream students, was a challenge to programme monitoring. Some mentees were incorrectly classified, in terms of their academic programme, in programme records. It is possible that these students' academic programme changed after their enrolment in the HFMP without staff's knowledge. Data capturing errors are also possible.

2. Do mentees receive the intended amount of mentoring services?

Mentee attendance was low among both ED and Mainstream students. Poor attendance is concerning as it means that mentees did not receive the intended amount of mentoring services which could influence outcome achievement. Significant linear relationships have been found between mentees' use of peer-mentoring and transition success, sense of belonging (Glaser et al., 2006) and academic achievement (Rodger & Tremblay, 2003). Reasons for first-year mentees' poor attendance of mentoring meetings include the programme's being initially helpful and subsequently not requiring further assistance, having adequate support elsewhere, timetable clashes, poor communication from mentors, and the programme's failure to deal with important issues (Glaser et al., 2006).

It is worthwhile noting that, in some cases, where mentees did not attend sessions, there was electronic communication with their mentors. For example, some mentor reports stated that the mentor texted the student to discuss something. For the purpose of this evaluation, this was not considered attendance as the optimal intended mentoring is through face-to-face meetings. While face-to-face mentoring is effective (Heirdsfield et al., 2008), the viability of electronic mentoring, or e-mentoring, should be considered in light of poor mentee attendance. A programme manager believed this electronic communication to be a good aspect of the programme in terms of fostering better mentoring relationships between mentors and mentees from different backgrounds and promoting more comfortable and frequent communication (Manager, personal communication, July 18, 2016).

It is important to consider the validity of mentor reports as a measure of mentee attendance. Mentor report templates did not include an attendance question so attendance was recorded where there was noted activity. Because some reports were incomplete, attendance data were missing. However, blank reports do not necessarily mean non-attendance. Using mentor reports

as a measure of attendance may, therefore, underestimate the amount of mentoring services received.

The absence of mentor reports for certain mentees may further underestimate or mask poor attendance. This may have resulted from staff's finding out late how many ED students there were, failure to communicate assignments of late-entering mentees to mentors, or mentors' feeling over-burdened by being assigned too many mentees. When the evaluator asked about mentees for whom reports were unavailable, one of the programme managers explained that she thought those mentees had dropped out of the programme. However, according to this manager, it was the responsibility of the previous programme manager, who left at the end of the first semester, to keep track.

3. What problems are recurrently experienced by mentees?

The recorded number of problems per mentee was low for both the ED and Mainstream sub-groups. The median and mode for number of problems experienced by ED mentees were slightly higher than for Mainstream mentees. This could indicate the difference in need between ED and Mainstream mentees; that, as anticipated, ED mentees experienced more problems than their Mainstream counterparts. Minority students do generally experience more problems adjusting to university than white students (Schultz, 2010).

It is possible that the number and recurrent types of problems are misrepresented by using mentor reports as the measure. Incomplete reports may have omitted problems experienced and the problems experienced by the mentees for whom no reports are available are not reflected. Evidently, my results lack a degree of validity as the number and types of problems experienced could only be estimated from the data available.

The most recurrent category of problems experienced by mentees was academic problems; specifically coursework management as well as test and assignment stress. Psychosocial problems such as personal issues related to home stress, pressure of being at UCT, depression, anxiety, pregnancy, grief, and others unstated, were the second most recurrent. Institutional knowledge, specifically using campus facilities and resources such as library navigation and resources, printing facilities, Eduroam, Vula, Peoplesoft, email, UCT offices, Jammie Shuttle services was the third most recurrent.

Bojuwoye (2002) investigated problems experienced by first-year students across some South African universities. As found here, academic demands of the institution were found to be a

recurrent problem and these demands are associated with fear of failure or not meeting one's own or others' expectations. Adjusting to academic expectations at university is more difficult for minority or disadvantaged students, such as ED students, because of the poor quality of high school education (Schultz, 2010).

Problems with institutional knowledge, specifically using campus facilities and resources, correspond with findings that stress associated with university administrative processes, stemming from information not being made explicit, is commonly experienced by first year university students (Bojuwoye, 2002). Campus facilities and resources are most likely also foreign to many ED students who come from under-resourced and otherwise disadvantaged schools and communities.

It seems problematic that, despite ED students' access to additional academic support associated with the four-year programme, they still experience academic problems. Staff may want to assess why students still struggle academically. Communication and cooperation between the academic and psychosocial components of ED students' support services could help to ensure that both academic and psychosocial problems are managed through the appropriate service-provision. In addition, as academic problems were most recurrently experienced, it is worth considering the primary need of ED students; whether it is psychosocial or academic under-preparedness. This would inform programme design.

The qualitative nature of mentor reports made analysis complex. Mentor reports are divided into three sections: issues raised by the mentee, advice given by the mentor, and assistance requested from programme staff. However, mentors entered mentee problems into any of these sections. Mentors' phrasing of problems varied and sometimes it was unclear whether the mentee had a problem or was simply inquiring. It was therefore up to the evaluator's judgment as to what constituted a problem. As such, there is some subjectivity in this analysis which could be removed by the creation of a quantitative, user-friendly reporting tool.

4. Are mentees satisfied with the mentoring they receive?

Generally, respondents were satisfied with their relationships with their mentors and perceived each mentoring activity to be useful. Those rated most useful were activities for institutional knowledge and skills and referrals to UCT services. Career and curriculum planning and academic support were also rated highly useful.

The literature contains reasons for the evident usefulness of these mentoring activities. Activities for institutional knowledge and skills transfer can help mentees adjust by, for example, sharing the institutional culture (Hall & Jaugietis, 2011). Peer-leaders' referrals to relevant student services can ameliorate students' physical and emotional problems as well as the stress associated with university adjustment (Shook & Keup, 2012). Career and curriculum planning and academic support activities may be perceived as useful because career planning and academic goal setting can contribute to improved academic performance (Gerdes & Mallinckrodt, 1994; Sommer & Dumont, 2011) and retention (Gerdes & Mallinckrodt, 1994) among first-year students.

The mentoring activities found to be most useful to mentees correspond with the recurrent problems experienced. The usefulness of activities for institutional knowledge and skills as well as referrals relates to the third most common problem category; institutional knowledge and, specifically, using campus facilities and resources. The usefulness of career and curriculum planning, academic support, and referral activities relates to the most recurrent category of problems; academic. Therefore, mentoring activities rated most useful are so because they catered to the problems mentees experienced.

A large proportion of respondents said they would recommend the programme to a friend which indicates that most respondents thought the programme was worthwhile. In terms of mentees' suggestions for more or less frequent meetings for programme improvement, there is no best practice for outcome achievement. Research into the relationship between mentees' time spent with their mentors and outcomes is necessary to identify best practice.

Respondents also suggested that mentors and mentees be matched based on academic majors and that mentor consistency of communication be improved. Both of these suggestions correspond with the literature. Systematic matching of mentors and mentees, based on career goals and subject areas of expertise has been linked to satisfaction and mentees' liking their mentors (Sorrentino, 2006). Systematic matching might also reduce participant attrition (Glaser et al., 2006). Mentoring quality, such as mentors' dedication and consistency in communication with mentees, is important (Leidenfrost et al., 2011; Sanchez et al., 2006) and can support programme objectives (Leidenfrost et al., 2011).

Service delivery

5. Are mentors sufficiently involved in the mentoring process?

In general, mentors appear to have been sufficiently involved in the mentoring process. Missing weekly mentor reports do not necessarily indicate poor mentor involvement as there may have

been administrative issues, or mentor confusion and dissatisfaction with reporting procedures. Mentors may have maintained contact and met with their mentees, even if reporting was neglected.

The reporting system for mentors required them to upload their reports at the end of each week onto a personalised Dropbox folder on the HFMP Mentors Vula site. One of the mentors who did not submit any reports did not have a personalised Dropbox folder on this site which might explain the lack of submissions. Mentors are supposed to keep one Excel document, to which each week's reporting is added. However, many mentors uploaded a new document each week and some used only the week one section of the template. This made it difficult to determine which week was being reported. This is a case of poor monitoring which may indicate a lack of clarity regarding reporting procedures rather than lack of mentor involvement. An improved monitoring system, which mentors are trained to use, could improve the quality of monitoring data used to assess mentor involvement, mentee attendance, recurrent problems, referrals given, and assistance requested from staff.

Inconsistency in the mentor-mentee pairing document suggests that omissions of mentees from mentor reports could be due to poor monitoring and communication of mentor-mentee pairings. Programme staff's finding out late how many ED students there were might have contributed to this. Some ED mentees were enrolled late and some Mainstream mentees signed up late. If mentors were aware of their new mentees, they might have failed to add them to their reports due to being assigned too many mentees. Ideally mentors should have been assigned five mentees each. However, on average, each mentor was assigned more than this. Asking mentors to submit high-quality weekly reports on so many mentees might be unrealistic.

6. Is mentor training content useful to mentors in their mentoring relationships?

On average, mentors perceived all training components to be useful. The most useful component was learning about mentor roles and responsibilities. This corresponds with the literature as clarifying mentor roles and expectations during training has been considered important by mentors (Drew et al., 2000; Howlett et al., 2009). This component makes mentors aware of the skills they may require, promotes their understanding of the mentoring responsibility, and advances commitment (Heirdsfield et al., 2008).

Collective problem solving was considered the most useful aspect of supervision sessions. This is found in the literature where creation of a shared network allows mentors to share their experiences and difficulties collectively (Howlett et al., 2009). The supervision topics of mentor

wellness and mentee relations were also deemed useful and this also corresponds with the literature. Mentor wellness training, encompassing self care, coping skills and recognising stress, can ensure that mentors are aware of constant supervision and support structures available to them (Drew et al., 2000). In terms of mentee relations, training mentors to establish rapport with their mentees (Thomas & Ward, 2010) and to maintain mentee engagement (Howlett et al., 2009) is important. Teaching mentors the skills to establish helping relationships helps them provide psychosocial support (Lennox Terrion et al., 2007).

Mentors suggested that the initial training should take place over more than one day. While mentor training alone may not be related to the quality of mentoring, its duration might be (Allen et al., 2006). Specifically, the number of hours spent in training has correlated positively to psychosocial mentoring (Allen et al., 2006). For example, a three-day intensive training programme for university peer-mentors resulted in favourable reactions, perceived usefulness of training elements and enjoyment (Lennox Terrion et al., 2007). Perhaps a longer training period could increase mentor satisfaction and improve mentoring quality.

Mentors also suggested joint workshops and training for mentors and mentees. Most programmes' training initiatives are directed at mentors. Joint mentor-mentee social events, held before the start of the year, could support mentor-mentee interaction and create helpful peer-networks (Drew et al., 2000). Joint training workshops may be useful for both mentors and mentees as a platform to meet, for ongoing improvement of the relationship, and for mentees to interact with each other.

Mentors suggested that the training curriculum include learning about UCT services. As discussed in chapter one, discussions to support mentors' knowledge of university services could improve the quality of referrals (Howlett et al., 2009; Lennox Terrion et al., 2007). As suggested by one mentor and Drew et al. (2000), representatives from such services may provide information about the university's counselling, academic, disability, and career services during the training session.

7. What assistance do mentors request from programme staff?

The assistance requested by most mentors was for staff to contact unresponsive mentees. This relates to the apparent poor session attendance of mentees. It also suggests that mentors spent time trying to contact unresponsive mentees to no avail before asking staff to assist. Mainstream mentees' particularly poor attendance may have resulted in mentors' time being wasted trying to contact, and asking staff to contact, mentees who may not have needed the programme.

The second most common assistance request was help with mentee relations. This relates to mentors' satisfaction with supervision on mentee relations. As discussed, teaching mentors the skills for developing rapport and sustaining relationships is important and is included in the training curriculum. However, communication and facilitation skills (Howlett et al., 2009) and diversity training are also important (Budge, 2006; Howlett et al., 2009) and are not included. Facilitation skills help mentors conduct meetings and manage difficult behaviour (Howlett et al., 2009). Diversity training supports cross-cultural understanding (Howlett et al., 2009). While communication, facilitation, and diversity training may be discussed in supervision sessions, it might be worthwhile including these in the training curriculum.

The third most common assistance requests were academic assistance for mentees and information of UCT facilities. Requests for academic assistance included asking staff to contact a specific department about a mentee and asking staff to organise additional academic help for the mentee. This relates to academic issues as the most recurrent mentee problem. Communication with EDU staff, concerned with ED students' academic progress, is important for referring mentees to the appropriate academic services.

Requests for information about UCT services relate to mentors' suggestions for training to include information on UCT services. Without such training, mentors seem to lack adequate knowledge of UCT services to refer their mentees. Discussions surrounding UCT services during the initial mentor training could lessen the occurrence of assistance requests to staff and, as discussed, improve the quality of referrals and overall mentoring.

8. To which services do mentors refer their mentees?

The three services to which most mentors referred their mentees were lecturers/tutors, The Writing Centre, and curriculum advisors in that order. All three of these relate to the most recurrent category of problems experienced by mentees, namely academic problems.

The two most recurrent mentee problems within the academic category, coursework management and test/assignment stress, both relate to referrals to lecturers/tutors. The fourth most recurrent problem within the academic category, curriculum issues, relates to referrals to curriculum advisors. The fifth, academic writing and referencing, relates to referrals to The Writing Centre. Mentor referrals were generally linked to mentee problems, representing success in terms of the referral process.

Organisational support

9. Does the programme receive sufficient funding?

The programme budget was sufficient for staff salaries, events and daily operations and no issues were experienced in terms of access.

10. Is programme staffing sufficient for performing intended functions?

There were several issues in terms of staffing which could have affected programme quality. The absence of a SDO meant a lack of liaison between EDU staff and programme staff. This might explain why programme managers found out late how many ED students there were, accounting for late enrolment and low dosage. The structure and boundaries of the programme's relationship with the EDU have not been defined. Communication between the EDU and programme staff is especially important in the light of mentees' recurrent academic problems as the EDU is responsible for monitoring ED students' academic progress.

The SDO vacancy also meant that there was no internal source of psychosocial support for mentees and mentees had to make use of The Student Wellness Centre which is overburdened. This means that many mentees may have struggled to get timely help, thus affecting the provision of psychosocial support. As one-hundred-and-sixteen mentees experienced psychosocial problems and psychosocial adjustment is an important programme objective, this is a serious problem.

Another possible problem related to staff turnover was the departure of one of the programme managers at the end of the first semester. This manager was apparently in charge of at least some aspects of monitoring, such as keeping mentee records and, when the manager was replaced, it seems there was a loss of knowledge regarding mentee enrolments and monitoring processes.

The programme manager interviewed argued that the role of supervisor mentor be kept internal so that programme managers, who are completely involved in the programme, conduct supervision. However, there is no evidence that manager-run supervision sessions were more useful or more frequent and it is possible that assigning all supervision groups to programme managers would overburden them.

The evident overburdening of mentors, as well as the manager's opinion thereof, suggests that there were too few mentors for the number of mentees. This might be due to the programme's inclusion of Mainstream students and the solution would then be to limit the programme's

capacity to accommodate only ED students. Easing this burden could improve the quality of mentoring services as well as mentors' reporting for more comprehensive programme monitoring and evaluation.

In addition to limiting the capacity for mentee intake, attracting more mentor applicants and being more selective might serve to optimise service delivery. Although there is an interview process, the programme currently accepts almost all candidates. Increasing the pool of applicants would allow staff to be more selective so as to improve the quality of mentors. As suggested by the manager interviewed, mentoring yields many benefits for mentors. Mentors feel more connected to the university, especially to their faculty (Glaser et al., 2006), which relates to academic success (Lennox Terrion et al., 2007). Social and communication skills as well as confidence improve (Glaser et al., 2006). As these benefits are mainly intangible, they should be made clear during recruitment so as to increase the pool of applicants.

Peer-mentoring programmes to improve university adjustment and academic performance adopt a holistic approach to mentor recruitment. GPA score, interpersonal skills, interest in student development, knowledge of goal-setting processes, ability to handle confidentiality, availability, psychosocial adjustment and willingness to share personal successes are important criteria (Thomas & Ward, 2010). These criteria should be considered to recruit high-quality mentors.

Outcome Evaluation

11. Do ED mentees demonstrate adequate psychosocial adjustment by the end of the programme?

At the beginning of the second semester, all mentees demonstrated adequate psychosocial adjustment, including ED mentees as a sub-group. This corresponds with the literature which states that university peer-mentorship can enhance first year undergraduate adjustment to university (Hall & Jaugietis, 2011), especially for students more likely to experience difficulties (Loots, 2007). However, because of the single-group research design used to answer this question, it cannot be said that the programme was solely responsible for mentees' psychosocial adjustment.

It is possible that a maturation effect occurred where mentees, including the ED contingent, naturally adjusted to university life over time. In this case, adequate psychosocial adjustment could have occurred without the programme. Psychosocial adjustment might also be explained by ED mentees' participation in other programmes which address under-preparedness such as augmented and foundation academic courses. While these promote academic success, they could

affect psychosocial adjustment as well. Another possibility is that mentees who were not psychosocially adjusted did not respond to the questionnaire, perhaps due to psychosocial issues or dissatisfaction with the programme.

The lack of a psychosocial adjustment pre-test makes it impossible to analyse the change in mentees from the beginning of the programme. It is possible that psychosocial adjustment was not poor initially and that no change occurred. This is important for staff to know in terms of need. Specifically, it is possible that ED students entering university may not actually experience psychosocial problems as such and, in this case, a programme designed to provide a certain type of psychosocial support would not meet participants' underlying need or achieve the longer-term intended outcomes.

12. Are ED mentees academically proficient by the end of the programme?

On average, ED mentees were academically proficient at the end of the programme. While this is not an indication that the programme contributed to their academic proficiency, it is a good starting point for assessing ED students' academic performance. Because they demonstrate academic proficiency, it is especially worth comparing ED students' GPA scores with the matched comparison group and assessing the relationship between mentoring dosage and the academic outcome.

13. Do ED mentees demonstrate greater academic proficiency than non-mentored students?

ED mentees had significantly higher GPA scores than their matched Mainstream counterparts. This suggests that something to which ED mentees were exposed gave them an advantage over matched Mainstream students who, based on their FPS, were similarly predisposed to academic difficulty.

While peer-mentoring is associated with academic success (Roger & Tremblay, 2003), ED students receive academic support outside of the HFMP in the form of augmented and foundation academic courses. Therefore it was not necessarily the programme or the associated psychosocial adjustment which provided this advantage. In addition, because the programme's list of ED students omitted some ED students from the Faculty's list, there may have been ED students who were not recruited to the programme at all. This makes attributing their academic proficiency to the programme impossible. In order to attribute some of the variance in GPA scores to programme dosage, the correlation and regression analysis may shed further light on this.

14. Do ED mentees who attend more of the programme demonstrate greater academic proficiency?

The correlation and regression analyses show small, yet promising, results in terms of the programme's influence on ED students' GPA. Specifically, attendance at mentoring sessions predicted a small proportion of the variance in ED students' GPA scores. As such, other variables are implicated in academic performance. For example, external academic support, mentee satisfaction with the mentoring experience, mentor involvement, and psychosocial adjustment may predict academic performance. Mentee satisfaction and mentor involvement, may also moderate the relationship between programme attendance and GPA.

Using mentor reports as a measure of attendance puts a limitation on these results. Specifically, as attendance was extracted by the evaluator based on reported interaction, attendance data lack a degree of reliability.

15. Do ED mentees remain enrolled at UCT at the start of the second semester?

This question could not be answered because enrolment data is only updated by the faculty at the end of each academic year. This is concerning because it means that HFMP staff do not, and cannot, monitor retention among mentees. Some ED mentees listed in programme records were missing from the Faculty's GPA list. These students may have dropped out of UCT. However, identifying missing students is not a reliable measure of retention. As retention is an intended long-term outcome of the HFMP, there should be a system in place to monitor mentees who drop out of UCT throughout the year.

Knowing who has dropped out and their experience at UCT would improve the programme for future mentees with similar experiences. It would also allow staff to update participant records and communicate the information to mentors to ensure that resources are not wasted on mentees no longer at the university, and to collect monitoring data for future evaluations regarding retention.

Suggestions for Programme Improvement

As this is a formative evaluation, it aims to support programme improvement (Rossi et al., 2004). The following suggestions, based on the above process evaluation discussions, are intended to improve both the programme and programme monitoring.

Service utilization

While the programme's primary target population is ED students as they are expected to need psychosocial and academic support to address university under-preparedness, almost half of all mentees were Mainstream students. This resulted in more mentees being assigned to each mentor which might have influenced the quality of mentoring and mentor reporting. To avoid over-coverage and ensure efficient use of programme resources, characteristics or eligibility criteria of the target population should be more sharply defined and available resources used more effectively (Rossi et al., 2004). Staff should maximise the number of participants in need and minimise those not in need (Rossi et al., 2004). It is therefore suggested that the programme be limited to ED students. This would allow programme resources, specifically mentors, to be used efficiently and could also improve the quality of monitoring data as each mentor would have fewer mentees on which to focus and report.

As mentoring sessions were quite poorly attended by mentees and electronic communication appeared to be a viable alternative, programme staff should decide whether electronic communication is sufficient in terms of maintaining mentor-mentee interaction and mentor training should be adapted to that decision. It is suggested that face-to-face meetings remain the ideal form of interaction because the mentoring curriculum is unlikely to be effectively communicated electronically. However, blended mentoring, combining face-to-face interaction with e-mentoring, can be effective and staff may wish to include this as a feature of the programme.

In the light of mentees' suggestion and evidence from the literature, matching mentees with mentors systematically, specifically based on academic majors, could improve mentee satisfaction and participation, as well as the quality of mentoring relationships.

Service delivery

Service delivery data were compromised by inconsistent mentor reporting. It is advised that a quantitative electronic reporting process be adopted for easier, less time-consuming reporting as well as more comprehensive and less subjective data analysis. In addition to supporting mentor involvement in terms of completing all required reports, this could contribute to more efficient and consistent implementation monitoring. Specifically, data regarding mentee problems, referrals, and assistance requested will be readily available and easier for staff to examine and address on a weekly basis.

Rather than uploading a template each week, a questionnaire-type form will be posted on the mentors' Vula site each week, where mentors complete tick-box and textbox style questions. Each week mentors will complete this electronic form for each of their mentees and submit electronically. This system is beneficial as there is no risk of losing data, automatic reminders can be sent to mentors before their reports are due and staff may import the data directly into an Excel spreadsheet. Figure 9 shows the electronic mentor reporting form which I created from the results of evaluation questions two, three, seven and eight.

It is recommended that mentors be trained to access, complete and submit these forms. Additionally, it is advised that staff engage in regular follow-ups with mentors on poor quality reporting, for example, if mentors do not submit their forms for all their assigned mentees. Promoting mentor accountability could improve involvement and commitment to high-quality reporting, thus allowing for comprehensive and consistent implementation monitoring.

Date: ☐

Mentee's student ID: ☐

1. Did the mentee attend the session this week?
   - ☐ Yes ☐ No

2. Did you communicate electronically with the mentee this week?
   - ☐ Yes ☐ No

3. Please select the problems experienced by the mentee this week
   - ☐ Coursework management
   - ☐ Test/assignment stress
   - ☐ Time management
   - ☐ Curriculum
   - ☐ Writing/referencing
   - ☐ Campus facilities and resources
   - ☐ Depression/anxiety
   - ☐ Homesick
   - ☐ Home stress
   - ☐ None
   - ☐ Other (please specify)

4. Please select the services to which you referred the mentee
   - ☐ Lecturer/tutor
   - ☐ Writing Centre
   - ☐ Curriculum advisor
   - ☐ Student Wellness Centre
   - ☐ Career Service
   - ☐ Financial aid resources
   - ☐ EDU Junior Research Fellow and Curriculum Advisor
   - ☐ Societies Office
   - ☐ None
   - ☐ Other (please specify)

5. Please select the assistance you would like
   - ☐ Contact unresponsive mentee
   - ☐ Mentee relations
   - ☐ Academic help for mentee
   - ☐ UCT facilities information
   - ☐ None
   - ☐ Other (please specify)

Figure 9. Electronic weekly mentor reporting form

Because of the complex nature of mentees' issues, it is advised that the initial mentor training take place over more than one day. It is important that mentors be taught concrete and practical means of managing the issues mentees may raise. It is suggested that information about UCT services be provided during the initial mentor training. In addition a greater focus on mentee relations, such as communication and facilitation skills and diversity training, during training and supervision sessions, is advised.

Organisational support

Although it is ultimately not the programme's decision, it is recommended that the position of SDO be, and remain, filled in order to enhance service delivery and organisational support. This evaluation may be used to demonstrate the importance of the SDO.

The benefits of mentoring for mentors should be communicated during recruitment in order to attract more candidates. Then, the following selection criteria may be used to select high-quality mentors: academic performance, interpersonal skills, interest in student development, availability, and willingness to share personal successes. This would prevent mentor shortages while enhancing the quality of service delivery.

It is advised that organisational lines between the HFMP, EDU staff and the Humanities Faculty be negotiated, agreed upon and documented. It is recommended that guidelines for the role of the EDU in the academic progress of mentees, referral pathways between HFMP staff and a designated EDU representative for reporting academic issues be established. Regular meetings between HFMP staff and EDU representatives are necessary in order to discuss mentees struggling academically. Such communication and cooperation between HFMP and EDU staff serves to ensure that both academic and psychosocial needs of ED students are met. Specifically, informing EDU staff of the high number of students experiencing academic problems could support the improvement of the academic support services for ED students. Organised partnership with the EDU will also help ensure that all ED students are enrolled on time and receive sufficient dosage of mentoring services. Further, the establishment of information-sharing procedures is advised regarding the Faculty's collation of retention data throughout the year and the sharing of this information among the EDU and HFMP.

It might be worthwhile for programme staff to be employed on a permanent basis to prevent staff turnover mid-programme which may have led to loss of knowledge and problems maintaining participant records. Due to the large amount of administrative work associated with the programme, tasking one manager with overseeing all administrative issues could be

beneficial. This could ensure consistent implementation monitoring of programme records, the Vula sites, and weekly mentor reports.

Recommendations for Future Evaluation

Process evaluation

Based on poor attendance, it would be beneficial to ask mentees who attended few sessions why they did so, as done by Glaser et al. (2006). This will allow insight into problems with the programme which may deter mentees from participating.

Outcome evaluation

Several designs are suggested for future evaluations for better assessment of the programme's effect on the intended outcomes. First, collection of all data using student identification numbers is advised for conducting regression analyses. Second, a pre-test of psychosocial adjustment is advised. Third, retaining the non-equivalent matched groups design is advised with suggestions to improve response rates. In addition, a psychosocial adjustment questionnaire adapted for the South African context could be useful.

To better determine programme effect in future evaluation, mentor reports should be labelled using student numbers for ease in matching attendance data to other variables. Mentee satisfaction, psychosocial adjustment, academic proficiency, and retention data should also be collected using mentees' student identification numbers. Ethics clearance must be given for this and, for primary data collection, mentees must be informed that their identification will not be used and will be replaced with a random code.

A pre-test of psychosocial adjustment should be administered when students enter university, ideally within the first week before the programme begins. This will assess the change in mentees' psychosocial adjustment from the beginning to the end of the programme using a repeated measures t-test as well as whether they experienced psychosocial problems at the start of the academic year. This is especially important in the light of findings that academic issues were the most common ones among mentees and that mentees were generally psychosocially adjusted at the end of the programme. Assessing whether psychosocial issues do, in fact, represent the primary need of ED students entering university is important for programme design.

The matched non-equivalent group quasi-experimental design should be retained in order to compare psychosocial adjustment, academic proficiency, and retention of ED mentees to their

Mainstream counterparts. Results of this design will indicate whether those who were mentored showed better results than those who were not. This design, combined with regression analyses between implementation and outcome variables, will contribute toward knowledge of programme effect.

In terms of increasing the response rates on the psychosocial measure, it should be noted that undergraduate students are an over-researched population. The questionnaire should be worded in a way which is accessible for these students and should not be too lengthy. It should be distributed as the programme ends, before the mid-year vacation, rather than at the beginning of the second semester which is a busy, often stressful, time.

In terms of measuring psychosocial adjustment, as no scales have been developed for the South African context, the challenge for scale developers is to design and validate a South African measure of psychosocial adjustment to university. This is important for acknowledging the current unique university climate in South Africa. This may be done by adapting the four adjustment domains to the South African university context. For example, feelings of safety may be especially relevant.

Limitations of the Evaluation

This evaluation has three limitations. The shortcoming of using mentor reports to answer the evaluation questions relating to programme dosage, mentees' recurrent problems, mentor involvement, mentors' assistance requests and mentors' referrals have been discussed. Missing and incomplete reports mean that a limited sample has been used to answer these questions.

Poor response rates to the mentee satisfaction and psychosocial adjustment questionnaire and the mentor training satisfaction questionnaire mean that positive results for the relevant evaluation questions may be due to a biased sample.

Third, the single-group post-test only design, used to answer the psychosocial adjustment evaluation question, does not support the conclusion that programme participants were better off after receiving the programme than before nor that they were better off than those who did not receive the programme. This emphasises the problems with using a post-hoc evaluation design and the importance of such design during programme planning.

Contribution of the Evaluation

This evaluation serves as a good starting point for improvement and future evaluation of the HFMP. The process evaluation presents tentative findings as to mentee participation, mentor involvement, recurrent problems, referrals, mentee and mentor satisfaction, and mentors' assistance requests. Suggestions have been made for improvement of the programme, specifically, with regard to limiting programme access to ED students, matching mentors and mentees based on majors, changes to mentor training and consideration of e-mentoring a mode of communication.

The newly-designed electronic mentor reporting system, based on the results of the process evaluation, informs a monitoring system which staff should use consistently to check participation, referrals, assistance requested as well as mentor involvement. Staff can then respond accordingly by, for example, following up on missing or incomplete reports or providing the assistance mentors need. The quantitative nature of the electronic form means mentors are more likely to complete and submit it each week because it is not as time-consuming as the qualitative version. Consistent monitoring will also ensure that datasets for future process and outcome evaluations are more complete, thus strengthening the validity of results.

Lastly, this evaluation provides a framework for future outcome evaluations of the HFMP. Research design, data collection, and data analysis methods have been presented so as to draw stronger conclusions about the programme's effect on outcomes.

Conclusion

University under-preparedness is a major problem in South Africa and results in academic failures, drop-out and racially unequal graduation rates. ED students, who enter university under-prepared because of their disadvantaged backgrounds, require additional support. The HFMP provides psychosocial support to these students using a predominantly plausible programme theory. Mentees were generally satisfied with their mentoring experience and perceived mentoring activities to be useful. Mentors found training and supervision useful. Mentees demonstrated psychosocial adjustment and academic proficiency after the programme and session attendance had a small but significant influence on academic proficiency. However, poor mentee participation and staffing issues may have resulted in implementation failure. Over-coverage might have contributed to poor management of programme resources. Combined with the lack of baseline psychosocial data, the prevalence of academic issues among mentees suggests that academic under-preparedness might be a greater underlying need than poor psychosocial

adjustment. In the light of poor data management and monitoring, recommendations have been presented to improve implementation monitoring and data quality for future evaluation. Evidently, although mentees seem to benefit from the programme, there are some difficult decisions to be made. If these issues are resolved, a good programme can become an even better, more effective programme.

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Appendix A

Adapted SACQ Measure

Social Adjustment Sub-scale (20 items)

1. I feel that I fit in well as part of the university environment.
2. I an1 meeting as many people, and making as many friends as I would like at university.
3. I am very involved with social activities at university.
4. I am adjusting well to university.
5. I have had informal, personal contacts with university lecturers.
6. I am pleased now about my decision to attend this university in particular.
7. I have several people I feel close to at university.
8. Homesickness or missing home is a source of difficulty for me now.
9. I enjoy living in a university residence. (Please leave this out if you do not live in a residence; any university housing should be regarded as a residence.)
10. I am satisfied with the extracurricular activities available at university.
11. I am getting along very well with my roommate/housemate(s) at university. (Please leave this out if you do not have a roommate.)
12. I feel that I have enough social skills to get along well in the university setting.
13. I am having difficulty feeling at ease with other people at university.
14. I am satisfied with the extent to which I am participating in social activities at university.
15. I haven' t been mixing too well with the opposite sex lately.
16. I have been feeling lonely a lot at university lately.
17. I feel I am very different from other students at university in ways that I don't like.
18. On balance, I would rather be home than here.
19. I have some good friends or acquaintances at university with whom I can talk about any problems I may have.
20. I am quite satisfied with my social life at university.

Personal-Emotional Sub-scale (15 items)

1. I have been feeling tense or nervous lately.
2. Lately I have been feeling down and moody a lot.
3. I have felt tired much of the time lately.
4. Standing on my own feet, taking responsibility for myself, has not been easy.
5. I haven' t been able to control my emotions very well lately.
6. My appetite has been good lately.
7. I have been having a lot of headaches lately.
8. I've given a lot of thought lately to whether I should ask for help from the Psychologist/Counselling Services at Student Health or from a psychologist outside university.
9. I've put on (or lost) too much weight recently
10. I have been getting angry too easily lately.
11. I haven' t been sleeping very well.
12. Sometimes my thinking gets muddled up too easily.
13. I worry a lot about my university expenses.
14. I have been feeling in good health lately.
15. I am experiencing a lot of difficulty coping with the stresses imposed upon me at university.